United States General Accounting Office

GAO

Briefing Report to the Chairman, Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives

April 2000

BALKANS SECURITY

Current and Projected Factors Affecting Regional Stability





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Abbreviations

DOD	Department of Defense
KFOR	Kosovo Force/International Security Force
SFOR	Stabilization Force
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization

United States General Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

National Security and
International Affairs Division

B-284872

April 24, 2000

The Honorable Floyd D. Spence
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services
House of Representatives

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Since 1992, the international community has responded to a series of armed conflicts in the Balkans region by establishing numerous, complex, military and civilian peace operations there.[1] The United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) significantly increased the active participation of their military forces in resolving the region's conflicts in late 1995, when they deployed the first NATO-led peace enforcement operation to Bosnia. Their involvement deepened again in 1999 with the start of the NATO bombing campaign against Yugoslavia and, after Yugoslavia decided in June 1999 to withdraw its security forces[2] from Serbia's province of Kosovo, with the deployment of another NATO-led peace enforcement operation[3] to the province.

We recently briefed your staff on our analyses of Balkans security issues. Specifically, we reported on (1) the current security situation in the Balkans, particularly in Kosovo and Bosnia; (2) the projected security in the region over the next 5 years; and (3) factors in the decision to withdraw

[1]For purposes of this report, the Balkans region is defined as Albania; Bosnia; Croatia; the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro, hereafter referred to as Yugoslavia); and Macedonia. Bosnia's official name is Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 1992, Serbia and Montenegro asserted the formation of a joint independent state called the "Federal Republic of Yugoslavia," but this entity has not been recognized as a state by the United States. "Macedonia" is an unofficial name for the state recognized by the U.S. government as The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which dissolved in 1991, is referred to in this report as the "former Yugoslavia."

[2]The term "Yugoslav security forces" refers to the Yugoslav army and the republic of Serbia's police.

[3]The U.N. Security Council provided the current NATO-led force in Bosnia with the authority to use force to enforce military provisions of the 1995 Dayton Agreement and force protection in Resolution 1088 on December 12, 1996. The U.N. Security Council provided the NATO-led force in Kosovo with the authority to use force to enforce military and public security provisions and force protection in Resolution 1244 on June 10, 1999.

Yugoslav security forces from Kosovo. You also asked us to describe how the executive branch has defined U.S. interests in the region in the National Security Strategy and public statements. This report summarizes the contents of those briefings.

Results in Brief

Despite the presence of two large NATO-led forces in the Balkans, the security situation regionwide remains volatile, as many difficult political, social, and other issues remain unresolved. About 70,000 NATO-led military personnel were deployed in all five countries in the region (as of January 2000), where they continued to ensure an absence of war in Kosovo and Bosnia. The international operations in both locations, however, face severe obstacles in their attempts to achieve their broad goals of promoting an enduring peace and lasting stability in the region. Most importantly, the vast majority of local political leaders and people of their respective ethnic groups have failed to embrace the political and social reconciliation considered necessary to build multiethnic, democratic societies and institutions. Further, the international community has not provided the resources to fully staff key elements of both peace operations. For example, U.N. members have failed to provide the amount of resources the U.N. mission in Kosovo says that it needs for its work, particularly with regard to staffing the U.N. international civilian police force. Because of this shortfall, it is not clear when the NATO-led force in Kosovo can turn over its public security responsibilities to the United Nations, even though the force had planned to do so by the end of September 1999.[4]

The election of opposition members to Croatia's parliament and presidency during early 2000 holds out hope for positive change in the region over time; however, all areas of the Balkans continue to face major unresolved political, social, and other problems that will contribute to regional instability over the next 5 years. These problems—such as differences over definitions of what territory and ethnic groups constitute a state and the difficulties associated with returning refugees and displaced persons to their homes—will likely take a long time to resolve through political

[4]The U.N. Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, the lead civilian organization in the province, has more responsibilities and authority than does the lead civilian agency in Bosnia, in that the mission is responsible for running all levels of government in Kosovo. The NATO-led force in Kosovo also has more responsibility than its counterpart in Bosnia; specifically, it is responsible for providing initial public security operations, including all police activities, until the U.N. mission can assume those roles.

processes. These problems also will require the continued security presence provided by NATO-led forces. If progress is not made in resolving these matters, conditions could evolve that might ultimately lead to an escalation of violent incidents or armed conflict in several areas of the region over the next 5 years, including in Serbia, Kosovo, Bosnia, Montenegro, and Macedonia.

Senior Yugoslav, U.S., and NATO officials said that a number of factors contributed to the Yugoslav decision to withdraw its security forces from Kosovo. According to a senior Yugoslav official in Kosovo, Yugoslavia's fear of a NATO invasion was the primary factor in this decision. This official, as well as senior U.S. and NATO officials, also said that Russia's diplomatic efforts were important in persuading Yugoslavia's President to agree to the withdrawal. Other factors mentioned by U.S. and NATO officials included the ability of the NATO alliance to remain united during the bombing campaign, the impact of NATO's strategic air campaign against Yugoslavia, and the international war crime tribunal's indictment of Yugoslavia's President for war crimes in Kosovo.

In the December 1999 National Security Strategy, the President said that the United States has "vital" interests in European stability and "important" interests in NATO operations in Bosnia and Kosovo.[5] The President also said that U.S. interests in the Balkans and Southeastern Europe are abiding because instability there threatens European security. Because the United States has important interests in Bosnia and Kosovo, other issues become relevant to the deployment of U.S. military forces there, such as the costs of U.S. military and civilian operations—estimated at $21.2 billion from fiscal years 1992 through 2000—and the relative contributions of U.S. and other NATO allies to recent and ongoing military operations.

Background

As of the late 1980s, the former Yugoslavia was a diverse federation of six republics, comprised of many different ethnic groups that were often based on religious affiliation. The dissolution of the former Yugoslavia in 1991 led to two sets of extended armed conflict, the first in Croatia and Bosnia from

[5]The National Security Strategy lays out three categories of U.S. national interests: vital, important, and humanitarian. The definitions of these interests are provided in Briefing Section V. According to the strategy, the decision to employ U.S. military forces is dictated first and foremost by U.S. national interests.

1991 through 1995 and the second in and around Serbia's province of Kosovo from early 1998 through mid-1999.

The warring parties to the conflicts in Croatia and Bosnia—specifically, Yugoslavia, Croatia, Croatian Serbs, and Bosnia's three major ethnic groups—were all fighting over control of specific territories tied to each group's own definition of its state, with some groups fighting for ethnically pure states. During and after the Kosovo conflict, the local combatants—Kosovar Albanian insurgents and Yugoslav security forces—had mutually exclusive goals. While the insurgents fought for the independence of Kosovo, Yugoslav security forces, most of whom are Serb, fought to retain Yugoslavia's sovereignty over the province. NATO entered this conflict on March 24, 1999, when it initiated a bombing campaign against Yugoslavia to force an agreement that would end Yugoslavia's aggression in Kosovo.

The international community reached agreements with the former warring parties that ended the conflicts and allowed the establishment of large, complex peace operations, first in Bosnia and later in Kosovo. Each operation included a large NATO-led force to enforce the military aspects of the agreements, as well as a substantial international civilian presence. These operations were designed, among other things, to assist the parties in complying with the agreements and to build democratic, multiethnic institutions.

Scope and Methodology

To address our objectives, we interviewed and reviewed documents from U.S. and international officials in the United States—as well as from U.S., international, and local officials in Europe—and compared information from them with actual conditions in the region. In Washington, D.C., we obtained information from the State Department, the Department of Defense (DOD), the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Central Intelligence Agency, the embassy of Croatia, a representative of the Serbian Orthodox Church, and numerous nongovernmental organizations. In New York, we obtained documents and interviewed officials from the U.S. Mission to the United Nations and the United Nations.

We conducted three visits to Europe during October 1998, July 1999, and October and November 1999. During these visits, we obtained documents and interviewed officials from

- the U.S. Mission to NATO; the U.S. Agency for International Development; NATO headquarters, including the Supreme Allied

Commander, Europe; the European Commission, and the Stability Pact office in Belgium;
- the U.S. embassy and the United Kingdom's Ministry of Defense in England;
- the U.S. European Command and U.S. Army Europe in Germany;
- the U.S. Mission to the European Office of the United Nations and Other International Organizations, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, and other international organizations in Switzerland;
- the U.S. Mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in Vienna, Austria;
- the U.S. embassy in Zagreb, Croatia; the U.S. Agency for International Development; Croatia's Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defense; the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees; the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe; the U.N. Mission of Observers in Prevlaka (a territory disputed by Croatia and Yugoslavia); and nongovernmental organizations in Croatia;
- the U.S. embassy in Sarajevo, Bosnia; the U.S. Agency for International Development; the headquarters of NATO's Stabilization Force and two of its three multinational divisions; governments at the national, entity, and municipal levels; the Office of the High Representative; the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees; the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe; the U.N. Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina; and nongovernmental organizations in Bosnia;
- the U.S. diplomatic office in Pristina, Kosovo; the U.S. Agency for International Development; headquarters and regional offices of the U.N. interim administration mission throughout Kosovo; the NATO-led Kosovo Force headquarters and five multinational brigade headquarters; Kosovar Albanian organizations, including the Kosovo Protection Corps; nongovernmental organizations; Kosovar Albanian political leaders; Yugoslavia's office in Pristina; and municipal Kosovar Albanian and Serb leaders throughout the province;
- the U.S. embassy in Tirana, Albania; the U.S. Agency for International Development; the government of Albania; the headquarters of the NATO-led Albania Force; the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees; the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe; the Western European Union; and nongovernmental organizations in Albania;
- the U.S. embassy in Skopje, Macedonia; the U.S. Agency for International Development; the government of The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the headquarters of the Kosovo Force support element; the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees; the Organization for

Security and Cooperation in Europe; the ethnic Albanian party in the ruling coalition; other ethnic Albanian leaders; and nongovernmental organizations in Macedonia; and
- the U.S. diplomatic office in Dubrovnik, Croatia, which manages U.S.-funded programs in Montenegro; the U.S. Agency for International Development; the government of the republic of Montenegro; the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe; nongovernmental organizations; and the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees representative from Belgrade, Serbia, in Montenegro.

We attempted to but could not obtain visas to travel to Belgrade or other areas of Serbia outside of Kosovo during our October-November 1999 visit to the region, a task made difficult by the lack of diplomatic relations between the United States and Yugoslavia.

Our report includes estimates of the number of people in Bosnia who returned home to areas controlled by another ethnic group ("minority returns") from 1996 through 1999. In reporting these estimates, we relied primarily on data obtained from the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees because, according to U.S. and international officials in Bosnia, these represent the official estimates of returns. For 1999, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees reported that 31,234 people had registered as having returned home across ethnic lines. The refugee agency estimated that 41,007 minority returns had actually occurred during 1999 based on a comparison of registered and actual minority returns in selected areas of Bosnia. An official from the U.S. embassy in Sarajevo told us that the U.N. estimate accurately portrays the number of minority returns during 1999, while an official from the Office of the High Representative estimated that the number of minority returns during the year was much higher, about 70,000 people. Because the data for 1997 and 1999 did not include minority returns to Brcko, Bosnia, we supplemented them with data from the office of the Brcko Supervisor, which has the special authority to oversee the return process to the Brcko area.

We also relied on data from the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees for numbers of people who became refugees or internally displaced persons as a result of the Kosovo conflict. According to a February 2000 document prepared by the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, the methodology used in compiling these data did not extend to systematic recording of population figures. Figures, where available, were drawn by the refugee agency from a variety of sources—including community leaders, the NATO-led force in Kosovo, and the U.N. international police force—and are

estimates only. They should not be taken to represent a consensus among international or local actors.

Our report also discusses the presence of paramilitaries in Kosovo and Bosnia. The term "paramilitary" has many different definitions. DOD defines "paramilitary forces" as forces or groups that are distinct from the regular armed forces of any country but resembling them in organization, equipment, training, or mission. Webster's dictionary defines a paramilitary as a group formed on a military pattern, especially as a potential auxiliary military force (Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 10th ed. [Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, Inc. 1993]). The U.S. government differentiates between groups organized to carry out "pausibly deniable activities on behalf of the state" and locally organized defense groups. People with whom we met in Kosovo referred to the organized groups of armed Serbs as paramilitaries. While some U.S. and international officials have said that control of these groups extends to the Yugoslav leadership in Belgrade, another U.S. official told us that this link has not been proven. Further, according to a U.S. official, although SFOR considers armed groups in Bosnia to be paramilitaries, they do not meet the more restrictive U.S. definition of paramilitaries, that is, groups organized to carry out "plausibly deniable activities on behalf of the state."

We conducted our work from October 1998 through April 2000[6] in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

Agency Comments

The State Department and DOD were provided an opportunity to review and comment on a draft of this report. The State Department—specifically, the Office of the President's and the Secretary of State's Special Advisor for Kosovo and Dayton Implementation (through the Deputy Special Advisor for Kosovo Implementation), the Office of the Legal Adviser, and selected country desk officers—provided oral comments. State substantially agreed with the report and provided technical comments that we discussed with relevant officials and, where appropriate, incorporated them in the report.

[6]We issued two interim reports during this period: one classified report on NATO's operations and contingency plans in the Balkans, and an unclassified version of that report titled *NATO's Operations and Contingency Plans for Stabilizing the Balkans* (GAO/NSIAD-99-111R, Mar. 11, 1999).

In written comments to our report, DOD said that the report presents a factual account of the current U.S. involvement in the Balkans but took issue with our discussion of U.S. national interests. Specifically, DOD said that our report misrepresented the three categories of national interests by including "abiding" as a type or category of interest and omitting "humanitarian and other" interests. We modified the text of the report to (1) clarify that the three categories of national interests defined by the National Security Strategy do not include the term "abiding" and (2) more fully describe "humanitarian and other" interests. DOD also provided separately technical comments that we discussed with relevant officials and included in the text of the report, where appropriate. DOD comments are reprinted in appendix VII.

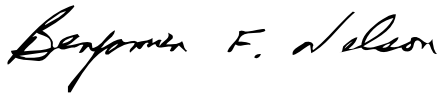
We also provided a draft of the report to the National Security Council; the U.S. European Command; NATO's military headquarters; the U.S. diplomatic office in Pristina, Kosovo; the Kosovo Force headquarters; the U.S. embassy in Bosnia; the Stabilization Force headquarters; the U.S. embassy in Macedonia; the Central Intelligence Agency; and selected international organizations in the region. We received a response back from all of these organizations, with the exception of NATO's military headquarters. We incorporated their technical comments, where appropriate, into the report.

Briefing Section I provides background information on the region. Briefing Section II discusses the current security situation in Kosovo and Bosnia. Briefing Section III describes the projected security situation in the Balkans. Briefing Section IV provides information on the factors that led to the decision to withdraw Yugoslav security forces from Kosovo. Briefing Section V provides information on selected issues related to U.S. and international operations in the Balkans.

As agreed with your office, unless you publicly announce its contents earlier, we plan no further distribution of this report until 30 days from the date of this letter. We are sending copies of this report to the Honorable Madeleine K. Albright, the Secretary of State; the Honorable William S. Cohen, the Secretary of Defense; General Wesley K. Clark, the Commander in Chief, U.S. European Command, and his successor, General Joseph W. Ralston; and other appropriate congressional committees. Copies will also be made available to other interested parties upon request.

If you or your staff have any questions about this report, please contact me at (202) 512-4128. Other GAO contacts and staff acknowledgments are listed in appendix VIII.

Sincerely yours,



Benjamin F. Nelson
Director, International Relations and Trade Issues

Background

The Balkans Region



Note: The 1999 conflicts in Serbia and Montenegro were the same event, specifically, the NATO bombing campaign against Yugoslavia.

Source: GAO based on Central Intelligence Agency maps.

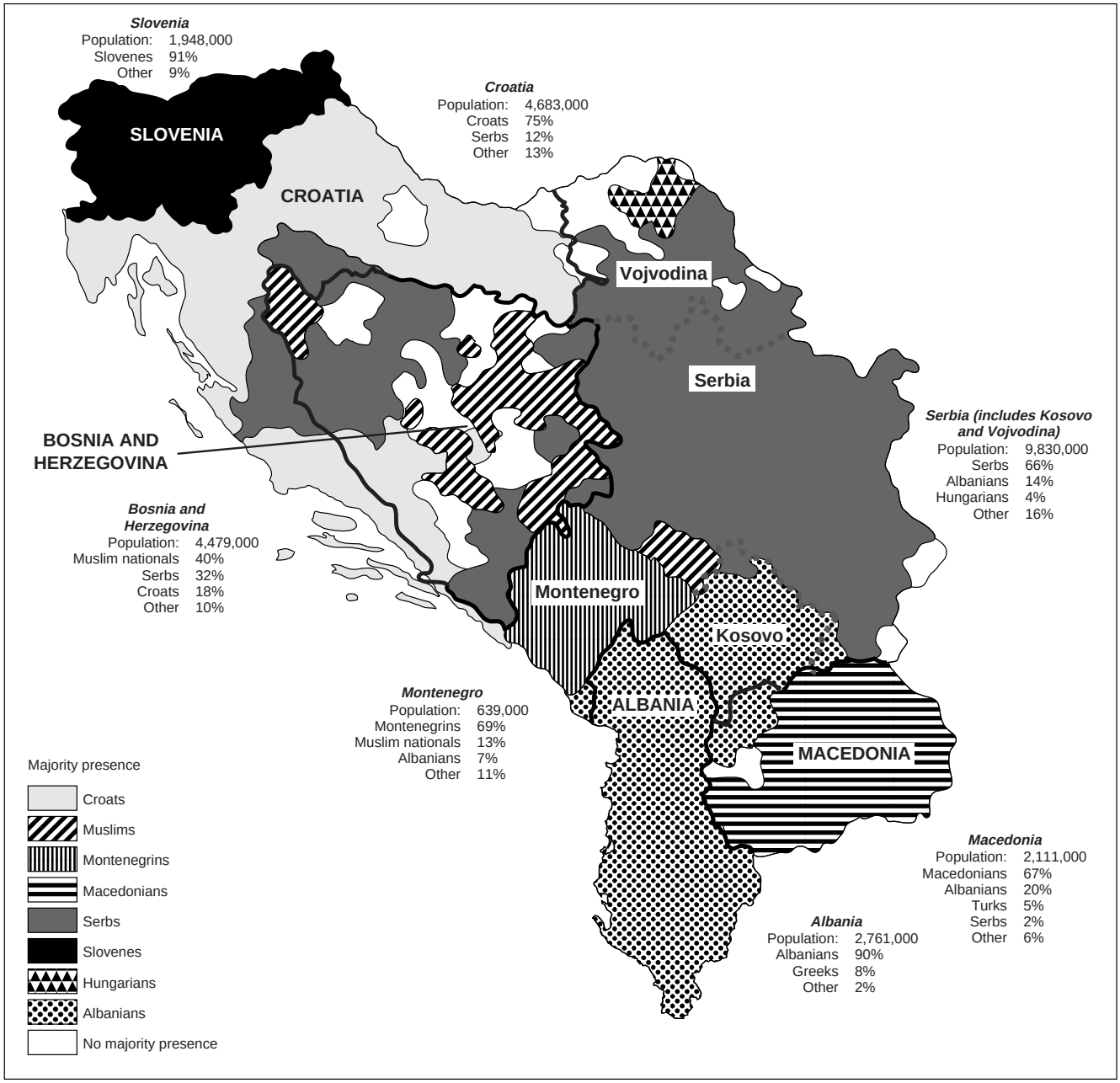
For purposes of this report, the Balkans region is defined as Albania and five of the six republics that made up the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, hereafter referred to as the former Yugoslavia.[1] The five former republics included in this report are (1) Bosnia and Herzegovina, hereafter referred to as Bosnia; (2) Croatia; (3) Macedonia; [2] (4) Montenegro; and (5) Serbia, which includes the two provinces of Kosovo and Vojvodina. In 1992, after four of the republics had declared independence, the two remaining republics–Serbia and Montenegro–formed the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (hereafter referred to as Yugoslavia) as the self-appointed successor to the former Yugoslavia.[3]

[1]The sixth republic of the former Yugoslavia, Slovenia, was outside of the scope of our review. The "Balkan peninsula" covers more countries than does our definition of the Balkans region, including Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, and Turkey.

[2]"Macedonia" is an unofficial name for the state recognized by the U.S. government as The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

[3]The United States and the United Nations do not recognize the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as the sole successor to the former Yugoslavia. Further, the United States does not recognize it as a state.

Ethnic Composition of the Former Yugoslavia and Albania Prior to the Dissolution of the Former Yugoslavia



Note: These figures are from the 1981 censuses of the former Yugoslavia and Albania. The 1981 census is considered to be the last reliable census of the former Yugoslavia.

Source: Central Intelligence Agency.

The three largest ethnic groups in the former Yugoslavia were (1) Serbs, that is, Slavs who are Eastern Orthodox Christian, specifically Serbian Orthodox Christian, comprising more than a third of the former Yugoslavia's population in 1981; (2) Croats, who are Roman Catholic Slavs (about 20 percent of the total population); and (3) Muslim Slavs, who are referred to as "Bosniaks"[4] in Bosnia and some other areas of the former Yugoslavia (about 9 percent of the total population). [5] These three ethnic groups lived, and continue to live, mainly in Serbia, Croatia, and Bosnia. As shown on the map, many areas of Bosnia were ethnically mixed, so that no one ethnic group was in the majority.

The Balkans region also includes Montenegrins and Macedonians. Both groups are ethnic kin to Serbs, as they consist of Slavs who are Eastern Orthodox Christian. Montenegrins generally belong to the Serbian Orthodox Church. [6] Many historians maintain that Montenegrins are Serbs, although the two groups have distinct identities arising from their different histories of occupation under the Ottoman Empire. Macedonians belong to a separate Macedonian Orthodox Church that is not recognized by the Serbian church. They have cultural links to Serbs, Bulgarians, and Greeks. The latter two groups at times have claimed that Macedonians are actually Bulgars or Greeks, respectively, rather than Slavs.

A large minority population of ethnic Albanians also lived, and continue to live, in the former Yugoslavia, mainly in areas along the country's border with Albania. They reside in Serbia, particularly in Serbia's province of Kosovo; Macedonia; and, in smaller numbers, Montenegro (see app. I). Ethnic Albanians constitute the majority of the population in Kosovo, in some western areas of Macedonia, and in a small area of southern Montenegro. Most Albanians are Muslim, but about 20 percent in Albania are Albanian Orthodox Christian, and about 10 percent in Albania and in Kosovo are Roman Catholic.

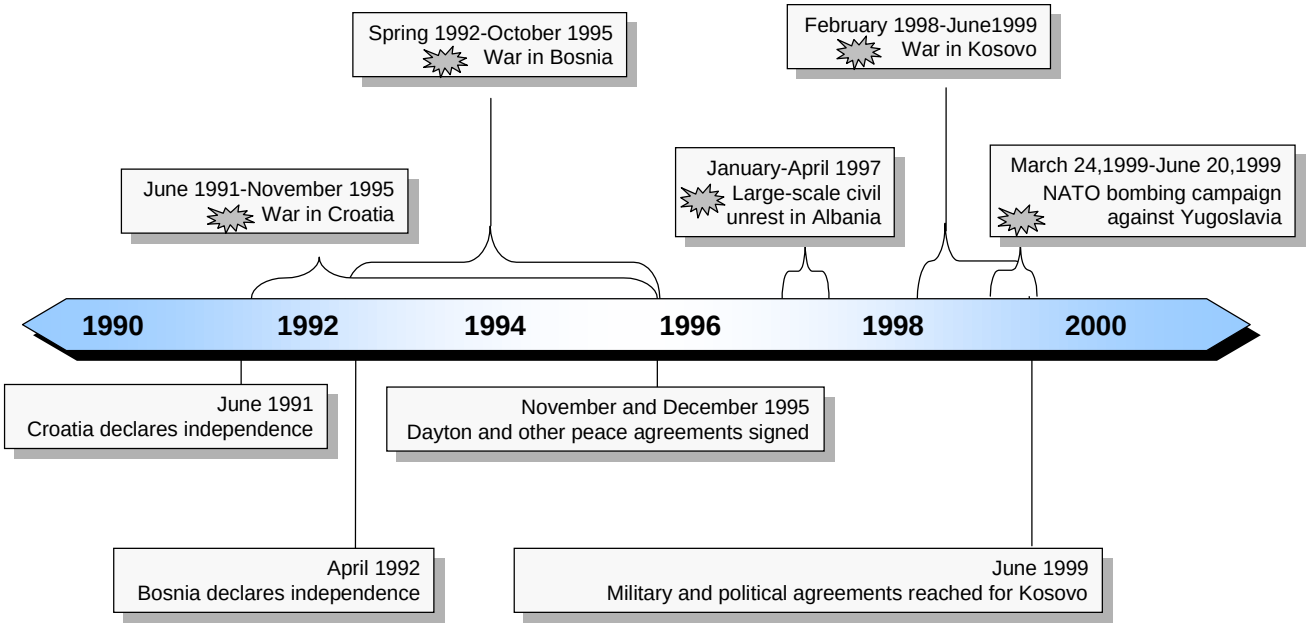
[4]This report defines "Bosniaks" as "Muslims," the definition used in State Department human rights reports.

[5]The other five major ethnic groups in the former Yugoslavia were Slovenes (7.8 percent of the total population), Albanians (7.7 percent), Macedonians (6.0 percent), Montenegrins (2.6 percent), and Hungarians (1.9 percent).

[6]In 1993, some Montenegrins in the republic asserted the reestablishment of a separate Montenegrin Orthodox Church, which had been consolidated into the Serbian Orthodox Church in 1920.

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Strategic Goals of Warring Parties to Major Conflicts in the Balkans, 1991 Through the Year 2000



Note: The European Union recognized Croatia's independence in January 1992 and Bosnia in April 1992. The United States recognized Croatia and Bosnia in April 1992.

The dissolution of the former Yugoslavia led to two sets of extended armed conflict, the first in Croatia and Bosnia, and the second in and around Serbia's province of Kosovo. The first set–the wars that coincided with the independence moves of Croatia and Bosnia–was a complex, interrelated series of conflicts. The warring parties to these conflicts pursued the following strategic goals:

- Yugoslavia, particularly its dominant republic of Serbia, sought to create a "Greater Serbia" and supported Serb paramilitary and military operations in Croatia and Bosnia. Croatian Serbs and Bosnian Serbs–with support from Yugoslavia–fought for and declared states separate from Croatia and Bosnia. In Bosnia, this area was referred to as "Republika Srpska."
- Croatia fought against Serb military and paramilitary forces on its territory, and supported the creation of a "Greater Croatia" that would include part of Bosnia's territory. During the war in Bosnia, Bosnian Croat leaders–with support from Croatia–fought for and declared the establishment of an ethnically pure state separate from Bosnia known as "Herceg-Bosna."
- The Bosniaks—who in 1991 were the largest ethnic group in Bosnia with about 44 percent of the population–fought for a unified, multiethnic Bosnia, but with Bosniaks in control.

The second set of conflicts consisted of (1) the war in Kosovo between Yugoslav security forces[7] and Kosovar Albanian insurgents and (2) the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) bombing campaign against Yugoslavia. During and after the conflicts, Kosovar Albanian insurgents and Yugoslav security forces had mutually exclusive goals. The insurgents fought for the independence of Kosovo. On the other hand, Yugoslav forces, most of whom are Serb, fought to retain Yugoslavia's sovereignty over the province, an area referred to as a cradle of Serbian culture and national heritage. The NATO bombing campaign against Yugoslavia is discussed in Briefing Section IV.

[7]For purposes of this report, the term "Yugoslav security forces" refers to Yugoslavia's military and the republic of Serbia's police.

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Refugees and Displaced Persons at the End of the Balkans Conflicts (1991 Through 1999)

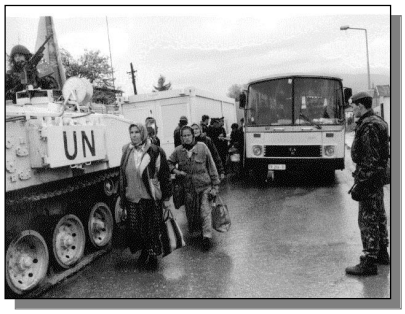
Approximately 4.4 million people were displaced as a result of the wars in Croatia, Bosnia, and Kosovo.

Kosovo: 1.5 million



Refugee camp for Kosovars in Macedonia
Source: U.S. Agency for International Development.

Bosnia: 2.3 million



U.N. peacekeepers escorting Bosnians
Source: United Nations.

Croatia: 0.6 million



Croatian Serbs in Banja Luka, Bosnia
Source: U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees.

The wars in Croatia, Bosnia, and Kosovo resulted in the displacement of an estimated 2.4 million refugees and 2 million internally displaced persons.[8] The largest population flows were associated with the war in Bosnia, during which an estimated 2.3 million people became displaced. During the war, most of the 1 million people who became displaced within Bosnia had moved to areas controlled by their own ethnic group; as a result, most areas of the country, with the exception of central Bosnia, were populated and controlled by a predominant ethnic group at the end of the war (see app. II). By the end of the war in Croatia, an estimated 300,000 Croatian Serbs had become refugees. During the Kosovo conflict, an estimated 1.5 million Kosovars, primarily Albanians, either fled or were forced out of their homes by Yugoslav security forces; about 800,000 of them left Yugoslavia. About 60,000 people, largely Serbs, fled the province before the start of NATO airstrikes against Yugoslavia. An estimated 200,000 Serbs lived in Kosovo at that time.

[8]This paragraph is based on data from the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees.

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International Agreements for Bosnia and Kosovo

BOSNIA 1995

Dayton Agreement

Goals:
- Provide security for the people of Bosnia.
- Create a unified, multiethnic, democratic Bosnia based on the rule of law, including cooperating with the international war crimes tribunal.
- Rebuild the economy.
- Ensure the right of people to return to their prewar homes.

KOSOVO 1999

Interim Framework for Kosovo: U.N. Security Council Resolution 1244

Goals:
- Create and manage an interim civil administration for Kosovo that maintains civil law and order, ensures the safe return of refugees and displaced persons, monitors human rights, and rebuilds the economy.
- Authorize KFOR to serve as an international military presence.
- Facilitate the process to decide Kosovo's future status.

KFOR -Yugoslavia Military Technical Agreement

Goals:
- Require the withdrawal of Yugoslav security forces within 12 days.

KFOR-Kosovo Liberation Army Demilitarization and Transformation Agreements

Goals:
- Require the demilitarization of the Kosovo Liberation Army within 90 days.
- Allow for the transition of the Kosovo Liberation Army into a civilian organization.

Legend
KFOR = Kosovo Force/International Security Force

The international community used various agreements to end the conflicts in Bosnia and Kosovo and establish conditions for deploying two large, complex peace operations.

The Bosnia peace operation was established by the Dayton Agreement[9] in mid-December 1995. This operation now consists of the NATO-led Stabilization Force (SFOR), which has the authority to use force to enforce compliance with the military aspects of the agreement, and four principal international civilian organizations. The lead civilian organization, the Office of the High Representative, was created by the agreement and given many responsibilities, including making the final interpretation in Bosnia of the agreement's civil provisions. In December 1997, the international community supported the decision of the High Representative to more actively exercise his Dayton authority to include imposing temporary solutions when Bosnia's political leaders were stalemated. The Dayton Agreement defined Bosnia as consisting of two entities that had been created during the war—Republika Srpska and the Bosniak-Croat Federation[10]—and divided them by the "interentity boundary line." (See app. II for a map of Bosnia and an organization chart of the Bosnia Peace operation.)

The overall political framework for Kosovo–as articulated in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1244 of June 10, 1999–called for, among other things, (1) the deployment of the Kosovo Force/International Security Force (KFOR) as an international security presence led by NATO, which has the authority to use force to enforce military agreements with the former warring parties and to ensure public safety and order; and (2) the establishment of a civilian U.N. interim administration mission to serve as the interim government for Kosovo. The U.N. mission is responsible for leading economic and social reconstruction, conducting elections, monitoring human rights, ensuring the protection and right to return of all refugees and displaced persons, and eventually facilitating the process to decide Kosovo's future status. The U.N. Security Council resolution did not exclude or call for the possibility of Kosovo's independence in the future. The resolution called for substantial autonomy for the people of Kosovo while retaining Yugoslavia's sovereignty over the province, even after the withdrawal of all Yugoslav security forces.

[9]"The Dayton Agreement" is the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina and its supporting annexes. The U.N. Security Council authorized this operation in Resolution 1031 on December 15, 1995.

[10]The Federation had been established in March 1994. Prior to this, the Bosniak and Bosnian Croat armies were fighting each other in central Bosnia.

The specific military commitments of the former warring parties in Kosovo are contained in three separate agreements. The June 9, 1999, military technical agreement between NATO and the governments of Yugoslavia and the republic of Serbia required the phased withdrawal of Yugoslav security forces from Kosovo within 12 days. According to U.N. Security Council Resolution 1244, after the withdrawal, an agreed number of Yugoslav and Serbian personnel (hundreds, not thousands) would be permitted to return to Kosovo for selected functions. As of April 3, 2000, no date had been specified for the return of these personnel. The military technical agreement also created a "ground safety zone", a 5 kilometer wide zone extending beyond the Kosovo boundary with the rest of Yugoslavia. No Yugoslav security forces —military or police— are allowed to enter or remain in the ground safety zone.

The June 20, 1999, agreement between NATO and the Kosovo Liberation Army called for the army's demilitarization.[11] Under the September 20, 1999, regulation of the U.N. mission and the accompanying statement of principles from the KFOR commander, the Kosovo Liberation Army was to transform into a civilian organization known as the "Kosovo Protection Corps"--an organization intended to be a multiethnic, emergency service agency of 5,000 civilian personnel (3,000 active and 2,000 reserve)--as well as into the Kosovo Police Service. The statement of principles allowed for a significant portion of the corps to be drawn from the leadership and ranks of the Kosovo Liberation Army. In addition, members of the army were given preference in the recruitment of the Kosovo Police Service.

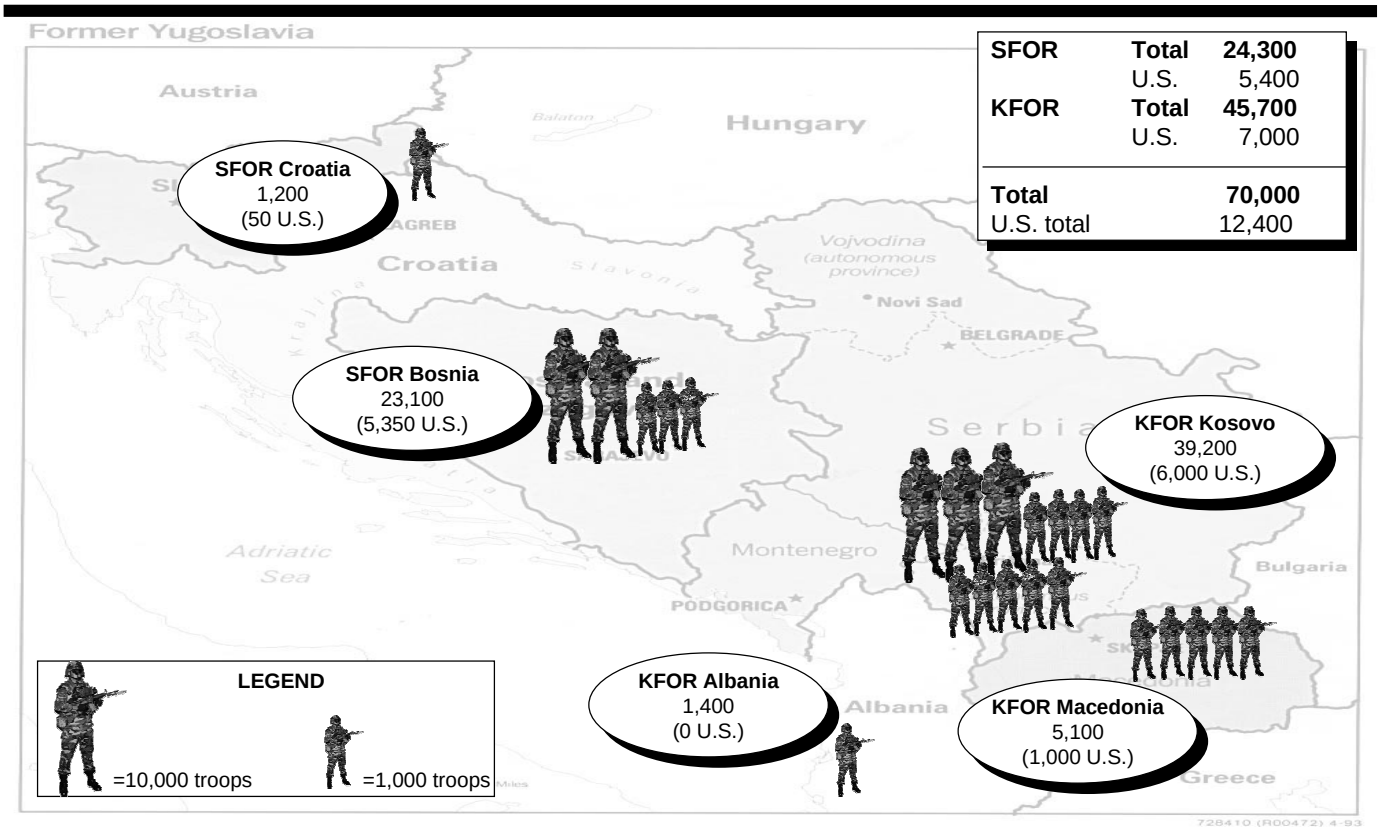
The Kosovo Liberation Army officially ceased to exist on September 20, 1999, when KFOR certified it as "demilitarized." In September 1999, the provisional Kosovo Protection Corps consisted of 9,200 personnel, primarily former Kosovo Liberation Army members. The corps was formally established in January 2000. (See app. III for a map of Kosovo and organization charts of the Kosovo peace operation.) KFOR and the U.N. mission in Kosovo currently share responsibility for transitioning the Kosovo Liberation Army into the Kosovo Protection Corps.

[11]This agreement is the "Undertaking of Demilitarization and Transformation by the UCK." "UCK" is the Albanian acronym for the Kosovo Liberation Army.

Current Situation in Kosovo and Bosnia

GAO

NATO-led Forces in the Balkans Are Preventing a Resumption of War



Note : All personnel numbers are as of January 2000. The main elements of KFOR and SFOR are located in Kosovo and Bosnia, respectively; all other troops are support troops. The KFOR Macedonia figure includes 163 personnel in Greece. SFOR figures exclude another 350 U.S. troops in Hungary who are directly supporting SFOR.

Sources: GAO analysis of personnel data from KFOR and SFOR headquarters.

The large presence of NATO-led military personnel in the region—about 70,000 troops located in five countries—has greatly reduced the ability of the former warring parties in Kosovo and Bosnia to restart the conflicts in those locations. However, the former warring parties largely retain their

wartime goals, and, according to western observers, would resume war if the NATO-led troops were withdrawn.

The NATO-led force in Kosovo continues to deter a resumption of hostilities there by (1) ensuring that uniformed Yugoslav security forces, who withdrew from Kosovo as scheduled, remain outside of the province; and (2) monitoring the demilitarization and transformation of the Kosovo Liberation Army into the civilian Kosovo Protection Corps. Although the NATO-led force considers the former Kosovo Liberation Army to be in compliance with its demilitarization agreement, KFOR and U.N. international police said that they have detained members of the provisional protection corps for carrying unauthorized weapons and engaging in violence and intimidation against ethnic minorities. Moreover, a large number of undeclared weapons remain hidden. Further, according to western observers and their reports, the Kosovo Protection Corps–which is considered by its leadership to be the core of Kosovo's future army–has retained the army's overall structure and remained capable of resuming hostilities on short notice. In addition, armed Kosovar Albanian insurgent groups outside of the control of the former Kosovo Liberation Army continued to operate in the province, as did Serb paramilitaries, specifically, locally organized groups of armed Serbs.

The NATO-led force in Bosnia, SFOR, has continued to enforce the cease-fire and ensure the separation and progressive reduction of the Bosniak, Bosnian Croat, and Bosnian Serb militaries, but paramilitaries—specifically, small groups of armed thugs organized and controlled by extremist political leaders–continued to operate in the country. SFOR also continued to provide a military presence in critical areas or "hot spots" where the international community expects violent resistance to Dayton implementation, for example, in locations where people are attempting to return to their prewar homes across ethnic lines.

Parties to the wars in Kosovo and Bosnia, largely supported by their respective ethnic groups, still retain their wartime goals. According to fall 1999 polls from the U.S. Information Agency, almost all Kosovar Albanians are willing to fight for the independence of Kosovo, while about half of Serbs in Serbia are willing to fight to retain Kosovo as part of Yugoslavia. Further, the vast majority of Bosnian Serbs and Bosnian Croats continued to want states separate from Bosnia, while almost all Bosniaks support a unified, multiethnic Bosnia, but, according to some observers, with Bosniaks in control.

GAO

Violent Incidents and Lack of Reconciliation in Kosovo

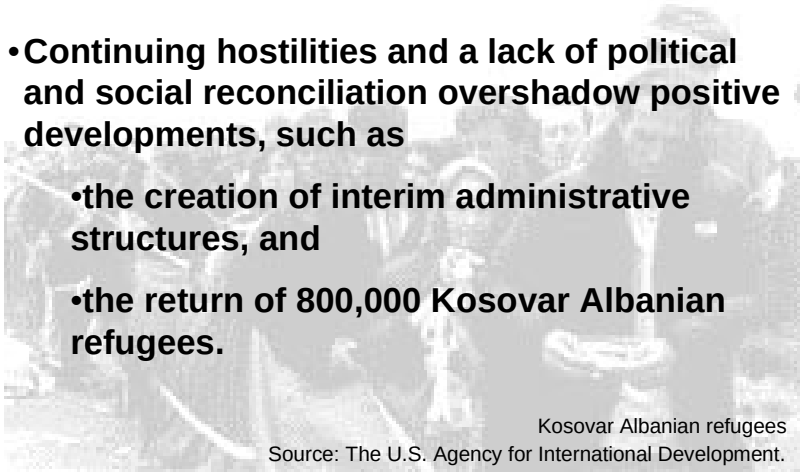


Historic Turkish market destroyed by Yugoslav forces in Pec, Kosovo
Source: GAO.



French KFOR street patrol in Mitrovica
Source: KFOR.

- **Overall violence has declined, but ethnically related violent incidents occur regularly and have recently increased.**
- **Mitrovica has become the major "hot spot" for violence.**
- **Continuing hostilities and a lack of political and social reconciliation overshadow positive developments, such as**
  - **the creation of interim administrative structures, and**
  - **the return of 800,000 Kosovar Albanian refugees.**



Kosovar Albanian refugees
Source: The U.S. Agency for International Development.

Since the end of the NATO bombing campaign, according to reports of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and others, the overall level of violence in Kosovo has declined significantly, but retaliatory, ethnically related violent incidents still regularly occur and recently increased with the approach of spring. In many incidents, Kosovar Albanians harass or violently intimidate ethnic minority populations, such as Serbs and Roma (Gypsy), frequently forcing them to leave their homes for Serb-controlled areas of Kosovo or locations outside the province. In other cases, Serb paramilitaries or armed groups have harassed and

intimidated Kosovar Albanians. In late February 2000, the U.N. international police reported increasing violence against Serbs in the province.

During early 2000, the city of Kosovska Mitrovica emerged as the most difficult "hot spot" in Kosovo after a series of escalating violent incidents among Kosovar Serbs and Albanians occurred there.[1] According to U.N. and other reports, the incidents included (1) Albanians striking with an antitank rocket a U.N. bus transporting Kosovar Serbs, killing two elderly people on board; (2) a crowd of Serbs going on a retaliatory rampage in the predominately Serb northern side of Mitrovica, leading to the deaths of 8 ethnic Albanians and the exodus of another 1,650 from the northern part of the city; (3) both ethnic groups attacking KFOR personnel and U.N. property; and (4) violence associated with Kosovar Albanians returning home to northern Mitrovica. In public statements, U.S. and international officials blamed extremists from both ethnic groups for causing the incidents, while a U.S. government official also blamed Yugoslavia's leadership for using Yugoslav security forces to foment the security problems.

The continuing hostilities and lack of political and social reconciliation between Kosovar Albanians and non-Albanians have overshadowed positive developments that have occurred in Kosovo since the end of the NATO bombing campaign. For example, the U.N. mission has established a number of interim administrative structures for governing the province, including the provisional judicial panel and the provincewide Kosovo Transition Council formed by the U.N. mission in July 1999; however, Kosovar Serbs either have never joined or have withdrawn from them. Further, while at least 800,000 Kosovar Albanian refugees who had fled Kosovo during the conflict had returned there by December 1999, about 243,000 non-Albanians had left the province for other parts of Serbia and Montenegro by November 1999[2] and, as of February 2000, an estimated 10,000 to 15,000 Serbs were displaced from their homes within Kosovo as they had moved to Serb majority areas.

[1]This is an important city due to (1) the presence of a large mining and industrial complex and (2) the belief by many Serbs that the city should be ethnically partitioned.

[2]Many of these people left the province as Yugoslav forces withdrew. As of mid-November 1999, estimates of the number of Serbs remaining ranged from 60,000 to 100,000.

GAO

Low-level Violence and Political Obstruction in Bosnia

- Political leaders continue to obstruct progress on the Dayton Agreement.
- People returning to their homes across ethnic lines face attacks and violent intimidation in some locations.
- The number of minority returns is increasing but much lower than hoped.
- The High Representative continues to impose laws and remove officials.



House destroyed in Stolac, Bosnia
Source: SFOR.



Bosnian Serb minority returnees
Source: SFOR.

While SFOR has ensured an absence of war in Bosnia, political leaders of the country's three major ethnic groups continued to obstruct the implementation of the Dayton Agreement's political, humanitarian, and economic provisions. For example, institutions of the national government and the joint Bosniak-Croat Federation still largely do not function due to lack of cooperation among the parties. In addition, the Republika Srpska government has been unstable since early March 1999, when the High Representative removed from office the entity's democratically elected President, a hard-line Serb nationalist, for his deliberate attempts to obstruct the implementation of the Dayton Agreement. Moreover, the economy remains stagnant, largely because Bosnia's political leaders continue to resist implementing meaningful economic reforms.

Further, people attempting to return home to areas controlled by another ethnic group continue to face sporadic attacks and violent intimidation in some locations, as well as political and legal obstruction. According to the SFOR Commander, in late 1999 and early 2000 the NATO-led force increased the number of "hot spots" its troops patrol, as well as the number of patrols in some areas, in response to violent incidents related to these returns. Recent polling data[3] show that of those refugees and displaced persons who did not wish to return to their prewar homes, 58 percent said that the lack of security for themselves and their property is the primary reason they will not return. In contrast, many international officials in Bosnia, including the SFOR Commander, believe that the primary obstacle to minority returns is the poor economy, primarily unemployment and a lack of funding to repair homes, rather than a lack of personal security.

The number of "minority returns" in Bosnia–that is, people returning to their prewar homes across ethnic lines–continues to increase each year, though the number in 1999 was significantly lower than the 120,000 minority returns hoped for by the international community. About 9,500 minority returns occurred in 1996; 39,000 in 1997; 41,275 in 1998; and 42,500 in 1999 for a total of about 132,275 minority returns since the signing

[3]The poll of 3,000 refugees and displaced persons from Bosnia was conducted in November 1999 by the Commission for Real Property Claims of Displaced Persons and Refugees, at the request of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees. The poll showed that about 76 percent of all Bosniak, 73 percent of all Bosnian Croat, and 36 percent of all Bosnian Serb refugees and displaced person respondents wished to return to their prewar homes.

of the Dayton Agreement.[4] According to the 1999 State Department Human Rights report and a senior SFOR officer, political leaders of all three ethnic groups have continued their attempts to take or maintain control of strategically important terrain through the return process. They may either organize or discourage the return of people from their own ethnic group to areas across ethnic lines or obstruct the return of people from other ethnic groups to their areas of control.

In an attempt to accelerate progress, the High Representative during 1999 and early 2000 continued to use his authority to revoke or amend existing laws, to impose new laws, and to remove government officials from office. For example, he imposed (1) a law that established a state border service[5] after Bosnian Serb delegates to Bosnia's parliament refused to pass the law and (2) laws that instituted a judicial framework to combat crime and corruption in the Federation. Moreover, to help promote minority returns, in late November 1999 he removed 22 local officials from their positions for fostering "the poison of division" and obstructing Dayton implementation.

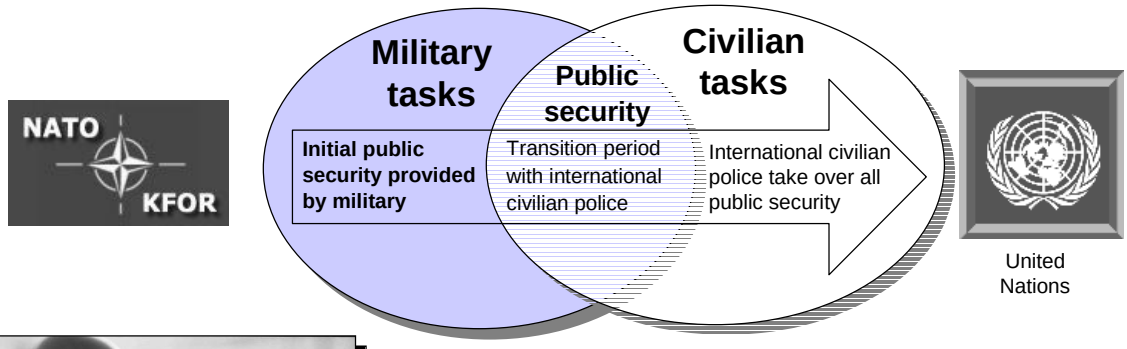
[4]In addition, the number of people who registered as returning home across ethnic lines increased from 15,531 in 1998 to about 31,234 in 1999, a trend cited as positive by U.S. and international civilian officials in Bosnia.

[5]The proposed state border service would be a national-level institution whose duties would include, among other things, police surveillance of Bosnia's borders, control of cross-border traffic, and search for persons within the border zone. The service's ethnic composition would be based on Bosnia's 1991 census data.

GAO

Civilian and Military Police Issues

Shortfalls in U.N. international police have indefinitely delayed the transition of public security tasks from KFOR to the United Nations.





SFOR and KFOR face shortages in their specialized policing units, known as multinational specialized units ("MSU").

Multinational Specialized Unit
Source: SFOR.

As originally envisioned by NATO planners, KFOR would conduct public security functions in Kosovo for a period of at least 3 months. After that, the U.N. international civilian police force would assume full responsibility for policing until the establishment of a local police service in Kosovo by the end of 2002. In November 1999, U.N. and KFOR officials were unable to specify a date by which the U.N. international police force would assume

primary responsibility for public security in Kosovo.[6] According to a senior KFOR officer, even after the public security function transitions to the United Nations, KFOR could reduce its presence by no more than one military police battalion of about 650 troops from each of the five military sectors, given the security situation and the force's other missions.

KFOR is still performing most of the tasks that were to have been transferred to the U.N. international police force by September 1999, largely because of delays in fully staffing the U.N. international police force, according to KFOR and U.N. officials. As of April 7, 2000, according to U.N. documents, the U.N. international police force was significantly understaffed at 2,886 personnel, about 1,830 fewer that the number authorized by the United Nations and almost 3,115 less than requested by the U.N. mission in Kosovo. Of these amounts, about 1,100 positions were for specialized police, that is, police trained in riot control duties. Because of these shortfalls, the U.N. police force had assumed primary responsibility for public security in only 4 of Kosovo's 29 municipalities as of January 2000.

The NATO-led forces in Kosovo and Bosnia both face a shortfall in their respective specialized police units, also known as "multinational specialized units." These units are intended to be specially trained and equipped military units[7] that would assist regular soldiers in dealing with civil disturbances associated with events such as returns of refugees and displaced persons and installation of elected officials. SFOR's multinational specialized unit has been significantly understaffed since its establishment in late August 1998, operating with only 1 of 2 required battalions, or 450 of the required 750 personnel. Similarly, KFOR's multinational specialized unit is only partially staffed. According to a U.N. official, KFOR is in effect competing with the U.N. international police force for these specialized police assets, as the NATO-led force's multinational specialized unit consists of the same types of police personnel being sought by the United Nations.

[6]This primary responsibility for public security, referred to as "police primacy," includes control of the following: enforcing criminal codes, conducting investigations, making arrests for criminal offenses, and providing community interface. KFOR plans to transfer primacy to the international police in stages and sector by sector as the U.N. police develop sustainable posts, communications, and detention facilities.

[7]These units have been described as constabulary- or gendarmerie-type units, that is, groups of soldiers serving as an armed police force for the maintenance of public order.

GAO

Other Constraints on Military Resources

- Two concurrent Balkans operations are straining national defense resources of NATO members.
- SFOR drawdown will reduce key assistance for civilian operations.
- After an initial drawdown, NATO is considering an increase in KFOR force levels.
- KFOR and SFOR operate under geographic and operational constraints.



SFOR operational reserve exercise
Source: SFOR.

Blackhawk helicopters conducting exercises in Bosnia Source: SFOR.

In mid-July 1999, about the time most of KFOR was deploying into Kosovo, senior NATO officials told us that many allies were considering reducing their troop contributions to SFOR, largely because they could not provide resources for two concurrent military operations in the Balkans. Based on a study by NATO's military headquarters, the North Atlantic Council–NATO's political leadership–concluded in October 1999 that a significantly reduced SFOR could maintain a secure environment in Bosnia, assuming that the force would be restructured to allow a more flexible response to outbreaks of violence and would focus only on the force's key military

tasks associated with controlling the Bosniak, Bosnian Croat, and Bosnian Serb militaries. About the same time, NATO revised KFOR's operations plan and force structure and authorized a reduction in its force levels, based on its assessment that improving security conditions in the province and the start-up of the U.N. mission in Kosovo allowed a modification to the force's mission and tasks.

The SFOR drawdown–from about 32,000 troops (as of September 1999) to about 20,000 troops (as of April 2000)[8]–will substantially reduce the amount of assistance the force provides to civilian efforts, including general security for the operations of international organizations, area security for returns of people across ethnic lines, and support for the conduct of elections. After SFOR announced its drawdown and the U.N. mission in Bosnia decided on a more robust implementation strategy, the U.N. mission developed a request for U.N. authorization of an armed protection group; as of April 7, 2000, this request had not yet been approved by U.N. headquarters.[9] The proposed group would consist of about 270 armed police and would provide protection for U.N. police monitors[10] and other U.N. personnel. According to U.N. officials, with protection from the armed protection group, U.N. staff would be able to credibly and safely pursue more robust actions to remove political/criminal obstructionists and complete earlier its mission of local police reform and restructuring.

NATO is currently reviewing the KFOR statement of requirements, which could increase the force size or change the force composition, in response to changing conditions in and around Kosovo. After initially deploying a force of about 43,000 NATO nation troops to Kosovo,[11] NATO nations contributing to KFOR reduced their troop strengths to 33,000 during the November 1999 troop rotation. However, after a rapid escalation of violent incidents occurred in Kosovska Mitrovica during February 2000, the

[8]After the drawdown, the United States will have about 4,600 troops in Bosnia.

[9]A U.N. official told us that the mission initially decided to make this request after being informed that SFOR troops may be delayed in responding to violent incidents against U.N. monitors due to the reduced number of troops available.

[10]The U.N. mission in Bosnia includes the International Police Task Force, a police monitoring mission of about 1,800 unarmed police. Because the force is 300 personnel below its authorized strength, the U.N. mission could establish the proposed armed protection group without increasing its authorized personnel levels.

[11]KFOR's peak strength was about 51,000 troops during late August 1999 due to overlapping troop rotations.

Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, asked for two additional battalions for Kosovo. As of March 17, 2000, two NATO countries had agreed to provide the equivalent of one additional battalion for this purpose, and, according to DOD officials, the United States had agreed to deploy an additional 125 military personnel to the U.S. sector. According to executive branch officials, it may ultimately be necessary for NATO to consider reviewing the KFOR operations plan to (1) better meet the staffing demands of the force's existing public security mission and (2) control Kosovo's provincial boundary to prevent armed Albanian groups from operating in southern Serbia from bases in Kosovo. (See Briefing Section III for more discussion of the security situation in southern Serbia.)

The two NATO-led forces also operate within geographic and operational constraints placed on participating forces by their respective national command authorities. Participating countries allow their forces to participate in SFOR and KFOR within specific areas and with specific rules of engagement.[12] These restrictions at times could prevent the commanders of the NATO-led forces from deploying their troops outside of specific geographic areas or using them for certain tasks within assigned areas, thereby reducing the forces' ability to respond quickly and effectively.

[12]The operation plans for the NATO-led forces contain the most permissive rules of engagement for countries participating in the forces. The plans also permit each participating country to issue clarifying instructions to ensure compliance with national law.

GAO

Shortfalls in Other Civilian Resources



Kosovo children return to school
Source: U.S. KFOR.

BRINGING PEACE TO KOSOVO
The UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo

U.N. efforts in Kosovo are hindered by a lack of civilian resources.

U.N. efforts to establish a functioning civil administration and create a democratic, multiethnic society in Kosovo are hindered in part by a lack of civilian resources.[13] For example, the U.N. mission was tasked with creating municipal administrative structures based on democratic principles. However, according to U.N. officials in Kosovo, the U.N. mission was slower to deploy international administrators to the field than had been hoped, due largely to a lack of available personnel at the start of the endeavor. These officials told us that the slow deployment of U.N. staff allowed the Kosovo Liberation Army to gain control of municipal administrations in an undemocratic manner and made it difficult for U.N. administrators to effectively control them. Moreover, the United Nations was unable to do advance planning for the mission's operations, including staff deployment, because it was informed that it would be leading the mission only a short time before its start.[14]

[13]As of March 1999, the U.N. mission consisted of over 1,500 international civilian personnel plus about 2,390 international civilian police.

[14]According to a senior U.N. official in New York, the United Nations was informed on June 8, 1999, that it would lead the international civilian effort in Kosovo. This was 2 days before the U.N. Security Council passed the resolution that established the U.N. mission. According to DOD, the United Nations was unofficially informed of the potential for this mission during May 1999.

Projected Security Situation in the Balkans

GAO

Summary of Unresolved Issues That Will Likely Affect Regional Security Over the Next 5 Years

	Post-conflict locations					Other locations	
			Federal Republic of Yugoslavia				
Issue	Bosnia	Croatia	Kosovo	Montenegro	Serbia	Albania	Macedonia
Disputes over what territory and ethnic groups constitute a state	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Destabilizing influence of Milosevic	X	X	X	X	X		X
Poor economies exacerbated by violent conflicts, sanctions against Yugoslavia, and failure to make market reforms	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Continued dislocation of refugees and displaced persons	X	X	X	X	X		X

Note: Croatia's former ruling nationalist party pursued policies that helped create these current conditions. The country's newly elected government has pledged to change many of these policies, as discussed later in this section.

Sources: GAO analysis of documents from and interviews with officials from the State Department, including the U.S. Information Agency; NATO, including SFOR and KFOR; the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe; the United Nations, including the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees; western observers; and nongovernmental organizations.

Throughout the Balkans, many of the region's major ethnic groups continue to dispute the definitions of what geographic territory and ethnic groups constitute their states. As discussed earlier, parties to the wars in Bosnia and Kosovo, largely supported by their respective ethnic groups, still retain their wartime goals. Croatia's former ruling nationalist party, which in early 2000 was defeated in parliamentary and presidential elections by democratic opposition groups, (1) politically, economically, and militarily supported Bosnian Croat aims to maintain a state separate from Bosnia; and (2) denied citizenship rights to and obstructed the return of Croatian Serb refugees. Over the past 2 years in Montenegro, as Slobodan Milosevic was consolidating Yugoslavia's federal power at the expense of the republic-level governments, segments of the population of Montenegro have begun calling for independence from Yugoslavia. In Albania, the U.S. Secretary of State told the Albanian parliament during mid-February 2000 that "the international community would no sooner accept a Greater Albania than it would a Greater Serbia or Croatia." According to some western observers, people in the region, especially in Macedonia, fear that Albanians in the region do support a "Greater Albania."[1] In Macedonia, where political and social tensions have increased between the country's two largest ethnic groups, Macedonians and Albanians, neither group appears fully committed to developing a unified, multiethnic state.

Milosevic retains authoritarian power over both Yugoslav and republic of Serbia governmental structures—including their security forces—and uses their combined power to further his political goals in Kosovo, Montenegro, and other areas in the region, as described later in this section.

Economies in the region, many of which were poor before the wars, suffer from years of wars, sanctions against Yugoslavia, and limited progress on making market reforms.[2] The destruction of infrastructure during the wars in Bosnia, Croatia, and Yugoslavia, as well as the months of civil unrest in Albania, led to economic turmoil in each of these locations and put stress on neighboring economies that depended on these locations as trade routes

[1]See appendix I for a map showing the distribution of ethnic Albanians in the former Yugoslavia.

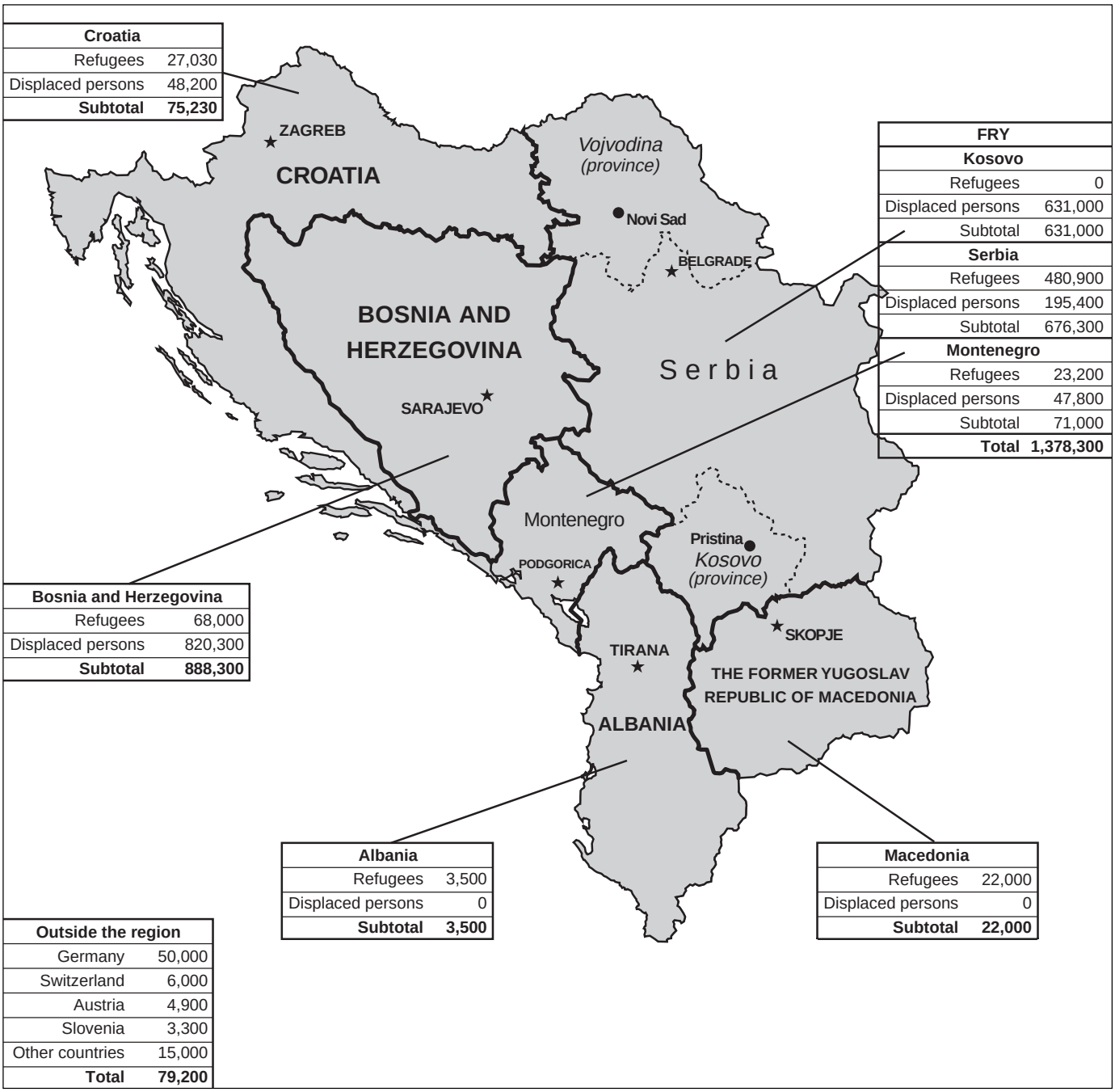
[2]According to a January 2000 report by the Council on Foreign Relations, the region's average per capita gross domestic product is less than 7 percent of the European Union's average. Per capita gross domestic product in the region ranges from an estimated $400 in Kosovo to about $4,500 in Croatia, continuing an historical pattern of economic disparity in the former Yugoslavia.

and markets. U.S., European Union, and U.N. sanctions against Yugoslavia and Serbia's economic war against its neighbors have caused economic decline in Serbia and trade losses for the rest of the region, since Serbia represents a large market for many of the region's countries. Balkan countries generally have been unable to implement the free market reforms necessary to attract foreign investment, due to constant political instability or a lack of political will on the part of their leaders, according to international officials and observer reports.

As shown in figure 1, approximately 2.4 million refugees and displaced persons from the conflicts in Bosnia, Croatia, and Kosovo have not returned to their prewar homes or found durable solutions to their displacement.[3] As of November 1999, about 97 percent of these people were residing within the Balkans region, either as refugees (624,630 people) or displaced persons within their own country (1.74 million people). The remaining 79,200 people were refugees located in countries outside of the Balkans region. According to observer reports and U.S. Information Agency polling data, the reasons for their continued displacement include the intransigence of political leaders, the lack of security for returnees, the unavailability of housing, and poor economic prospects.

[3]These solutions include humanitarian/refugee status, other resident status, resettlement, and repatriation.

Figure 1: Estimate of Refugees and Displaced Persons Still Seeking Solutions in the Balkans, November 1999



Croatia	
Refugees	27,030
Displaced persons	48,200
Subtotal	**75,230**

FRY	
Kosovo	
Refugees	0
Displaced persons	631,000
Subtotal	631,000
Serbia	
Refugees	480,900
Displaced persons	195,400
Subtotal	676,300
Montenegro	
Refugees	23,200
Displaced persons	47,800
Subtotal	71,000
Total	**1,378,300**

Bosnia and Herzegovina	
Refugees	68,000
Displaced persons	820,300
Subtotal	**888,300**

Albania	
Refugees	3,500
Displaced persons	0
Subtotal	**3,500**

Macedonia	
Refugees	22,000
Displaced persons	0
Subtotal	**22,000**

Outside the region	
Germany	50,000
Switzerland	6,000
Austria	4,900
Slovenia	3,300
Other countries	15,000
Total	**79,200**

Source: U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees.

GAO

Unresolved Issues, by Location

Bosnia Kosovo
- The former warring parties retain their wartime goals.

Montenegro
- Power struggle exists between Milosevic and President of Montenegro.
- Population is divided over moves toward greater autonomy or possible independence.

Macedonia
- Political and social tensions between ethnic Albanians and Macedonians have increased.

Serbia
- Milosevic retains power, but low-level violence occurs regularly, particularly in southern Serbia, where armed ethnic Albanian groups operate.

Albania
- Crime and corruption are pervasive and contribute to political instability.

Croatia
- Security situation stable, but former nationalist government pursued policies that contributed to regional instability.



Former Yugoslavia
Map source: Central Intelligence Agency.

This slide summarizes the key unresolved issues by location. For Bosnia and Kosovo, these issues, as well as the international community's attempts to resolve them, were discussed in Briefing Section II. The following four slides discuss in more detail the key security issues in Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro, and Macedonia.

The international community has attempted to resolve political, social, and other problems throughout the region through a variety of programs intended to develop democratic institutions and practices; reform and regenerate economic systems; and provide humanitarian assistance for refugees, displaced persons, and others in need. In late July 1999, the international community formally established a regional assistance framework called the "Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe." The Stability Pact is intended to coordinate and prioritize economic and other assistance going to the region, including Romania and Bulgaria, and to accelerate and deepen the integration of a reformed region into the Euro-Atlantic community. (See app. IV for more information on the major U.S. and international military and civilian programs in locations other than Bosnia and Kosovo and app. V for information on the Stability Pact initiative.)

GAO

Prospects for Change in Croatia



President of Croatia Stipe Mesic
Source: Embassy of Croatia.

Croatia's newly elected leaders have promised policy changes that are viewed by U.S. and international officials as positive for Croatia's relations with Bosnia and the region.

Croatia has recently reached agreements on refugee returns and the transparency of funding to Bosnian Croats.



Prime Minister of Croatia Ivica Racan
Source: Embassy of Croatia.

At this time, it is unclear when and to what extent the new government will implement the changes.

Prior to its defeat in elections in early 2000, Croatia's nationalist ruling party destabilized the region by, among other things, providing economic, political, and military support to Bosnian Croat attempts to maintain a separate state and obstructing the return of Croatian Serb refugees.[4] The leaders of Croatia's new government have publicly pledged to change many

[4]About 64,500 Croatian Serbs had returned to Croatia as of November 1999, out of an estimated 300,000 who had fled the country.

of the earlier policies. Specifically, the new President pledged that Croatia would allow the return of all Croatian citizens to the country, regardless of ethnicity; recognize that Croats form an element of Bosnia, make transparent its support for Bosnian Croats; and cut off funds for the military of their "quasi-state." In public statements, U.S. and international leaders welcomed the change in government as a positive step in establishing a democratic system and economic reforms in Croatia and in improving the country's relations with neighboring countries, as well as with the rest of Europe. Further, according to international officials in Bosnia, the elections signify to Bosnian Croats, whose political leaders belong to Croatia's former ruling nationalist party, that they must give up their hope of becoming part of Croatia.

In late February and early March 2000, Croatia's new government took steps toward changing government policies on Croatian Serb refugee returns and making transparent funding for Bosnian Croat institutions. For example, the new government announced a program for the return of 16,500 refugees to Croatia and reached an agreement with the Republika Srpska Prime Minister for the two-way return of Bosnian Croat and Croatian Serb refugees to their prewar homes. Further, under U.S. auspices, Croatia's Defense Minister reached an agreement with the Federation Defense Minister (a Bosnian Croat) that provides for Croatia's continued financing of the Bosnian Croat army through the Standing Committee for Military Matters, an institution established by the Dayton Agreement to coordinate the activities of the three militaries in Bosnia.

Despite these moves, however, it is not clear (1) to what extent Croatia's new government will be able to implement these changes; (2) whether all of Croatia's political leaders have given up the dream of a "Greater Croatia"; or (3) how Bosnian Croats would react to significant changes, if any, in their relationship to Croatia. For example, Croatia's refugee return program and two-way return agreement with Republika Sprska may be obstructed by property laws that continue to favor Bosnian Croat refugees over Croatian Serbs[5] and a lack of progress in returning Bosnian Croats to

[5]A large obstacle to the return of Croatian Serb refugees is that Bosnian Croat refugees occupy their homes in Croatia. Under Croatia's current property law, if alternative accommodations cannot be found for the current user of the property, the property is not returned to its rightful owners. In February 1998, the Republika Srpska Prime Minister set a goal of returning 70,000 non-Serbs to their prewar homes in Republika Srpska. However, as of the end of 1999, only 19,975 non-Serbs had returned.

their homes in Bosnia. Further, if Croatia does threaten to cut all ties with Bosnian Croats, a significant number of them may react by choosing to revoke their Bosnian citizenship, retain their Croatian citizenship, and move to Croatia, instead of opting to effectively join Bosnia's institutions and become part of Bosnia.[6] About 77 percent of Bosnian Croats want to join Croatia or become an independent state rather than remain part of Bosnia, according to late 1999 polling data from the U.S. Information Agency.

[6]According to the High Representative, Bosnian Croats, who currently can hold dual citizenship in Croatia and Bosnia, must select one country for citizenship by 2003.

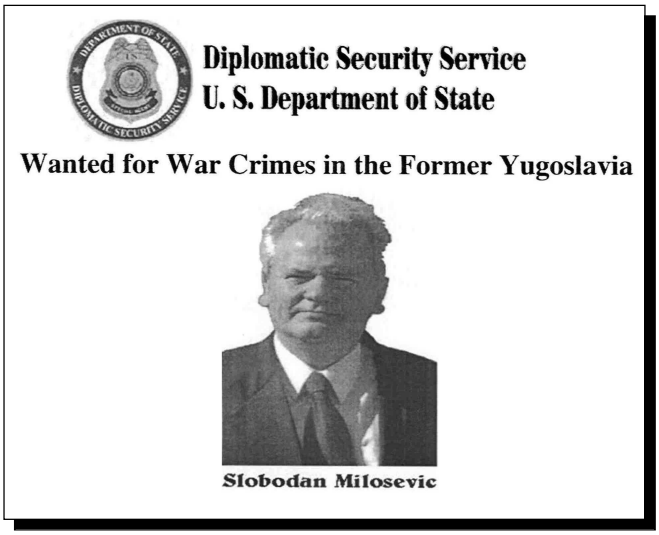
GAO

Prospects for Change in Serbia

U.S. officials call Milosevic the single most destablizing influence in the region.

The Serbian opposition's inability to unite may prevent them from unseating Milosevic.

If the Serbian opposition did defeat Milosevic, it is not clear to what extent it will improve regional security.



Excerpts from reward poster for Slobodan Milosevic
Source: State Department.

According to senior U.S. and NATO officials, Slobodan Milosevic is the single most destabilizing influence in the Balkans. These officials believe that Serbia cannot democratize or integrate with the rest of Europe until Milosevic is removed from power. Further, according to a U.S. official, the people of Kosovo will not settle for anything short of independence, including autonomy, while Milosevic retains his power in Yugoslavia. Many western officials believe that whoever replaces Milosevic would be easier to negotiate with, less inclined to engage in armed conflict, and less likely to destabilize the region.

It is unclear whether international efforts to replace Milosevic with the Serb opposition would succeed, as the opposition remains disunited. According to DOD officials, it is not a forgone conclusion that the opposition will replace Milosevic, as current members of Milosevic's regime may stay in power in his absence. Western observers have noted from recent polling data that Serb opposition parties could defeat Milosevic in a democratic election, if they are able to unite on a single platform. The opposition parties, however, remain unable to unite and capitalize on popular dissent after the NATO bombing campaign, thus far only unifying in a call for early elections. According to statements by the U.S. Secretary of State, the election of democratic opposition parties in Croatia will help this situation by showing Serb opposition parties that they can win if united.

Further, if the efforts to remove Milosevic from power and replace him with the Serbian opposition were to succeed, it is unclear to what extent the change would improve regional security. While a senior U.S. official stated that Milosevic's removal would result in Kosovar Albanians agreeing to remain in Yugoslavia, political leaders and people in the region told us that a change in Yugoslavia's leadership from Milosevic to the opposition would have no impact on the security or political situation in Kosovo. They and western observers in Kosovo explained that Serb opposition leaders strongly support continued Yugoslav sovereignty over Kosovo and would not agree to Kosovo's independence, the primary political demand of Kosovar Albanians during and after the war. Further, according to recent public statements, Serb opposition leaders have close links to Bosnian Serb political leaders who, while many of them are anti-Milosevic, are nationalists who retain the goal of maintaining "Serb unity" and a Serbian state separate from Bosnia.

GAO

Prospects for Violence Over the Next 5 Years in Serbia, Kosovo, and Bosnia



KFOR soldiers collecting illegal weapons in Kosovo
Source: KFOR.

Ethnic Albanian attacks against Yugoslav forces are destabilizing southern Serbia.

Violence in Kosovo may escalate due to unresolved political issues and attacks in southern Serbia.

Sporadic violence in Bosnia may escalate as people attempt to return home across ethnic lines.

In Serbia, low-level violence has occurred regularly since late 1999 in the form of attacks against the republic's police in southern Serbia–a predominately ethnic Albanian area outside of Kosovo but near Kosovo's boundary–by ethnic Albanian insurgents who believe Kosovo's territory includes this area. In early March 2000, a U.N. official reported that 5,000-6,000 ethnic Albanians had fled southern Serbia since June 1999. Many of

these people had reported an increase in Yugoslav forces in that area, stating that the security situation for ethnic Albanians there had deteriorated to such an extent that life had become intolerable. The U.N. official added that his agency is concerned that if the conflict between the ethnic Albanian extremist groups and Serbia's police is allowed to continue, there may be larger refugee flows from southern Serbia.[7]

Current low-level violence in Kosovo and Bosnia is likely to continue and may escalate given the slow pace of political and social reconciliation in both locations. As long as KFOR maintains a credible deterrent presence, the likelihood of renewed armed conflict is low; however, low-level violence will likely continue and may escalate due to the unresolved political status of Kosovo, competition for power among ethnic Albanian political parties, and an absence of reconciliation among the province's ethnic groups. Further, the previously discussed violence in southern Serbia may also destabilize the security situation in Kosovo. The Commander of KFOR stated on March 10, 2000, that the situation in southeastern Serbia constitutes a threat to the peace and security of Kosovo and could develop into a regional security issue. He also stated that KFOR is prepared to take all action necessary to ensure Kosovo is not used as a staging base by either ethnic Albanians or Serbs wishing to "export violence" into southeastern Serbia.

According to U.S. and NATO officials, as long as SFOR remains, the force will continue to prevent an outbreak of war among the three militaries in Bosnia. However, as SFOR draws down, there will still be a requirement to maintain a presence significant enough to deter violence associated with people returning home across ethnic lines or against international civilian organizations operating in Bosnia. These types of violent incidents, according to a U.N. official, will likely increase as more people return to areas with few or no minority returns and as the international community attempts to implement other civil aspects of the Dayton Agreement. DOD officials told us that SFOR, as part of its transition strategy, will look more to the local police forces in Bosnia to provide security for these situations. According to the 1999 State Department Human Rights report, local police in Bosnia–which are still largely organized along ethnic lines–continue to use excessive force, or do not ensure security, to discourage minority resettlement in majority areas.

[7]The United Nations has estimated that 60,000-70,000 ethnic Albanians live in southern Serbia near its border with Kosovo. (See app.1.)

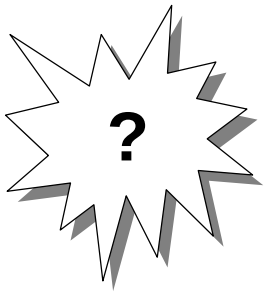
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Prospects for Armed Conflict Over the Next 5 Years in Montenegro and Macedonia

Armed conflict could develop in Montenegro or Macedonia if unresolved political issues are not addressed**.**



Macedonia
Source: U.S. European Command.





Serbia and Montenegro
Source: U.S. European Command.

The security situation in Montenegro has become more volatile over the past year due to the controversy within the republic over its discreet moves toward greater autonomy or independence and the Yugoslav leadership's aggressive action against the republic. The ruling coalition government of Montenegro–which consists of people who support either greater autonomy or independence–controls the republic's 20,000-strong police force. The anti-independence movement is led by the former President of Montenegro (now the Prime Minister of Yugoslavia) and is supported by Milosevic, who controls the 14,000 Yugoslav army troops and 1,000 federal-

level police in Montenegro and has used them and other federal institutions to intimidate the republic's coalition government. According to late 1999 polling data from the U.S. Information Agency, about 30 percent of Montenegro's population support independence, 36 percent greater autonomy for the republic within Yugoslavia, and 27 percent the status quo.

The likelihood and extent of armed conflict in Montenegro depend on a number of complex factors, such as how far the President of Montenegro is willing to push Milosevic to gain greater autonomy, whether Milosevic would intervene in Montenegro short of a referendum on independence, and whether the current governing coalition of Montenegro would stay together if a referendum on independence is not held this spring. Western observers in Montenegro hold differing views on whether developments in Montenegro would lead to armed conflict. Some believe that the past close relationship between the President of Montenegro and Milosevic would encourage them to reach an understanding before violence occurs, while others believe that the moves toward greater autonomy or independence will lead to possibly armed conflict.

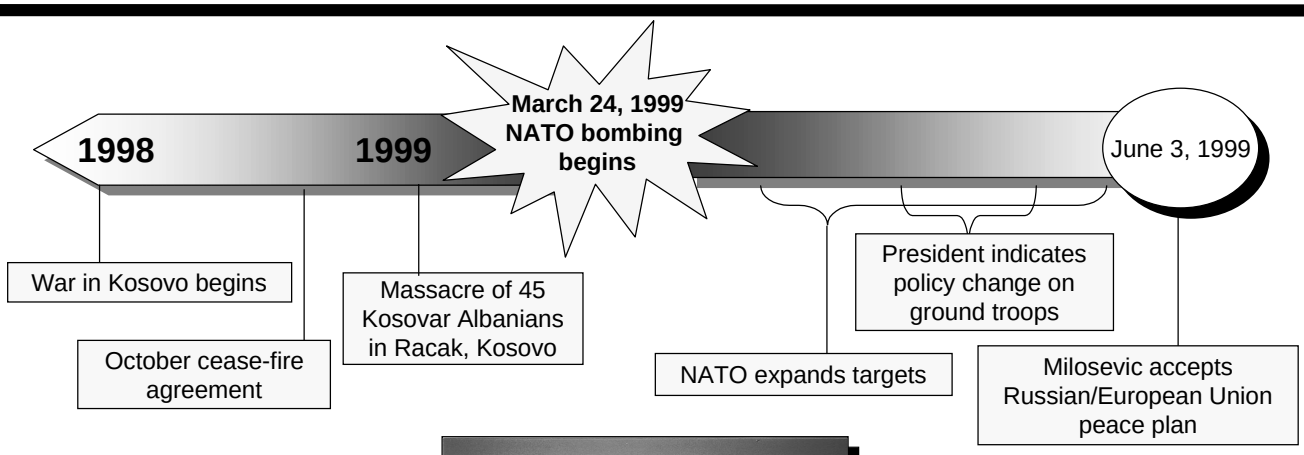
While ethnic Macedonians and Albanians are currently working together in the ruling government coalition, several western observers told us that interethnic tensions between these two groups could ultimately result in armed conflict. Structures are in place on both sides that could serve as the basis for future ethnically based militaries. Specifically, Macedonia's military and internal security forces are predominantly ethnic Macedonian, and armed, radical Albanian groups are operating in Macedonia.

These observers offered a range of views about how soon and under what scenario armed conflict may occur in Macedonia. Armed conflict could develop (1) if ethnic Albanian parties pulled out of the coalition government due to a lack of progress in resolving political issues; according to a western observer, it would most likely occur sometime over the next year; or (2) if radical Albanian groups began to violently target Macedonian institutions, leading Macedonia's police to crack down on ethnic Albanians. A western observer in Macedonia is most concerned with this second threat in the near term, stating that these radical groups have been emboldened by what the Kosovo Liberation Army was able to accomplish. Either of these scenarios could lead to a spiral of violent incidents and ultimately armed conflict among the country's two major ethnic groups, similar to the violence that occurred in Kosovo. Other observers told us that ethnic tensions in Macedonia could result in violence between the two communities in 10 to 20 years.

Factors That Led to the Withdrawal of Yugoslav Security Forces From Kosovo

GAO

Events Leading Up to and During the NATO Bombing Campaign





Result of NATO bomb on post office used by Yugoslav forces in Pristina, Kosovo
Source: GAO.

- February 1998: Large-scale conflict began in Kosovo, largely characterized by ethnic Albanian attacks against Yugoslav security forces followed by excessive, indiscriminate, and disproportionate military responses of those forces against ethnic Albanian insurgents and the civilian population.
- October 1998: Under threat of NATO airstrikes, Milosevic agreed to allow unarmed international monitors and a NATO air verification mission to verify Yugoslav compliance with cease-fire and force reduction agreements. About this time, the Kosovo Liberation Army

agreed to exercise self-restraint. In late 1998 and early 1999, there was a continuous deterioration of the security situation as both sides violated their agreements.

- January 15, 1999: The retaliatory massacre of 45 Kosovar Albanians by Yugoslav security forces at Racak led the international community to renew efforts to negotiate an end to the conflict. This occurred 1 week after the Kosovo Liberation Army ambushed a Yugoslav police patrol and reportedly killed three officers, an act called a terrorist attack and serious breach of the cease-fire by international monitors.
- February 1999: NATO and the United States agreed to deploy troops to Kosovo in a "permissive environment"—one where all parties to the conflict agree to the presence and mission of NATO-led forces. The first round of peace talks in France ended with neither party signing the proposed interim agreement.
- March 19-23, 1999: Peace talks broke down after Kosovar Albanian leaders signed the proposed agreement but Yugoslav officials did not. After the international monitors withdrew from Kosovo, Yugoslav forces began a massive offensive. U.S. negotiators failed in their attempts to secure a last-minute settlement with Milosevic.
- March 24, 1999: In announcing the NATO airstrikes, the President said he did not intend to put U.S. troops in Kosovo to fight a war.
- April-May 1999: NATO escalated the bombing to include strategic targets throughout Yugoslavia. NATO deployed ground troops to Macedonia and Albania for humanitarian and possible war fighting missions.
- May 6, 1999: The West and Russia agreed to a basic strategy and terms for a possible peace settlement.
- May 18, 1999: In responding to a question about the possible use of ground troops to end the Kosovo conflict, the U.S. President stated that no military option had been ruled out.
- May 25, 1999: NATO endorsed an operational plan for a NATO-led peace enforcement mission in Kosovo and later approved a force level of about 50,000 troops for the mission.
- May 27, 1999: Milosevic and four senior officials from the governments of Yugoslavia and Serbia were indicted for war crimes in Kosovo by the international war crimes tribunal.
- June 2, 1999: The President committed 7,000 U.S. troops to the proposed NATO-led mission, reiterating that no military option had been ruled out.
- June 3, 1999: Milosevic agreed to a settlement brought by Russian and European Union envoys. NATO suspended the air campaign on June 10 after some Yugoslav withdrawals, and officially ended it 10 days later.

GAO

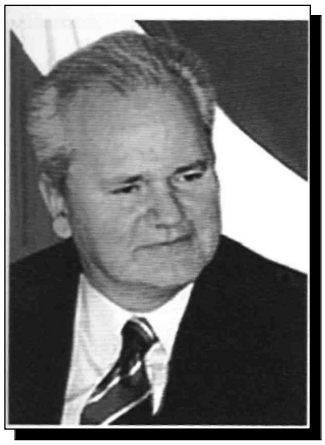
Factors in the Decision to Withdraw Yugoslav Security Forces From Kosovo

View of Yugoslav official

- Fear that a NATO ground invasion would lead to Yugoslavia losing Kosovo
- Timely offer presented by Russia; interpreted by Yugoslav officials as allowing Yugoslavia to keep Kosovo on paper
- Impact of NATO air campaign on Serbia's infrastructure

Other views

- Fear of ground invasion
- Russia's diplomatic efforts and loss of support from Russia
- Impact of NATO's strategic air campaign
- NATO cohesion and ability to take all action necessary
- Indictment of Milosevic for war crimes
- Loss of support within Serbia for the war



Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic
Source: U.S. Department of Defense.

Senior U.S., U.N., and NATO officials, as well as a senior Yugoslav civilian official in Kosovo, offered a number of views on the decisive factors in Milosevic's decision to withdraw Yugoslav security forces from the province. According to the senior Yugoslav official, the fear of a NATO ground invasion, combined with the timely offer from Russia's envoy, was the primary factor in the withdrawal of Yugoslav forces from the province. According to this official, the Yugoslav leadership believed that NATO would invade Kosovo if the air campaign alone could not defeat Yugoslav forces and feared that an invasion would result in Yugoslavia losing Kosovo completely. This official said that the Yugoslav leadership saw the offer of Russia's envoy as the best possible option, deciding that it was better to withdraw than be conquered, if NATO honored the proposed agreement.

Senior U.S., U.N., and NATO officials also noted the significance of Milosevic's fear of a ground invasion and the positive role played by Russia's diplomatic efforts, particularly because of their impact in convincing Milosevic that Russia no longer supported his war. These officials also cited the following factors as key to the decision to withdraw Yugoslav security forces from Kosovo.

- **The impact of NATO's air campaign.** According to U.S. and NATO officials, NATO's air campaign against strategic, military-industrial, and national command-and-control targets in Yugoslavia was a significant factor in the withdrawal of Yugoslav security forces from Kosovo. Some of these officials said that this air campaign had an economic impact on Yugoslavia's leadership because it hurt the ability of Milosevic and his associates to make money.
- **NATO's continued cohesion and ability to take the military action necessary.** Senior NATO and U.S. officials stated that Milosevic thought that the alliance would fall apart after collateral damage began to occur, and he was no longer willing to sustain the bombing once he felt NATO would remain cohesive. Also, NATO and U.S. officials believed that Milosevic was affected by the fact that NATO leaders showed resolve to use all force necessary to prevail.
- **The indictment of Milosevic.** NATO and U.S. officials also told us that this indictment was to a lesser extent a factor in Milosevic's decision to withdraw his forces.
- **Loss of support for the war within Serbia.** A U.N. official stated that he believed Milosevic withdrew his forces because he had lost support from his inner circle. Similarly, U.S. officials noted that unrest within Serbia helped put pressure on Milosevic to end the war.

Selected Issues Related to U.S. and International Operations in the Balkans

GAO

Executive Branch Descriptions of U.S. Interests in the Balkans



European continent

Vital



NATO emblem



Balkans and southeastern Europe

NATO KFOR

Important

SFOR СФОР

The executive branch has described U.S. interests in the Balkans in a number of ways. The National Security Strategy[1]–the most authoritative statement on the President's definition of U.S. interests and military commitments worldwide—lays out three categories of national interests: vital, important, and humanitarian. The strategy directly links U.S. interests

[1] *A National Security Strategy for a New Century* (Washington, D.C.: The White House, Dec. 1999).

in the Balkans to two of these three types of interests, stating that the decision to use military force is dictated first and foremost by the definition of U.S. national interests.

- European stability is described in the strategy as a "vital" U.S. interest. Vital interests are of broad, overriding importance to the survival, safety, and vitality of the United States, for example, the physical security of territory belonging to the United States and U.S. allies. According to the strategy, the United States will do what it must to defend these interests, using military force decisively and, if necessary, unilaterally. The U.S. commitment to European security includes U.S. leadership in NATO and the forward presence of 100,000 military personnel in Europe.
- NATO operations to end the conflicts and restore peace in Bosnia and Kosovo are presented as "important" U.S. interests, rather than as vital interests. According to the strategy, important interests do not affect the survival of the United States but do affect national well-being and the character of the world in which Americans live. In cases where important U.S. interests are at stake, the strategy states that the use of military forces should be selective and limited.[2]

The National Security Strategy indicates that United States has a continuing interest in "peace in the Balkans and Southeastern Europe" [3] but does not directly link vital or important interests in the region to when, how, or for how long U.S. military forces would be employed there. The strategy states that continued instability in the region threatens European security, an area that it had previously defined as a vital U.S. interest. In commenting on our report, the Undersecretary of Defense for Policy reiterated that the National Security Strategy reads, "'The United States has an abiding interest in peace in this region because continued instability there threatens European security.' The identified interest here is clearly instability threatening European security – a vital interest in and of itself."

[2]Although the executive branch initially said that the U.S. military mission in Bosnia would be limited to 1 year, the Bosnia and Kosovo operations now have missions of indefinite duration.

[3]The strategy defines the "Balkans and Southeastern Europe" as Albania, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro (including Kosovo), and Slovenia.

The National Security Strategy does not directly link humanitarian interests to the Balkans region, although executive branch officials on many occasions have cited humanitarian interests there. The report cites the following as examples of humanitarian and other interests that may require a U.S. military response: (1) natural and manmade disasters; (2) promoting human rights and seeking to halt gross violations of those rights; and (3) supporting democratization, adherence to the rule of law, and civilian control of the military. According to the strategy, the military is generally not the best tool for addressing humanitarian concerns, but under certain conditions it may be appropriate to use U.S. military forces for these purposes. The strategy states that such efforts by the United States will be limited in duration.

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Considerations for Continuing Operations in the Balkans

- What are **the costs and risks** of operations?
- What is the likelihood that operations will **accomplish their objective**?

Have objectives been clearly defined?

What is the appropriate U.S. contribution relative to that of U.S. allies?

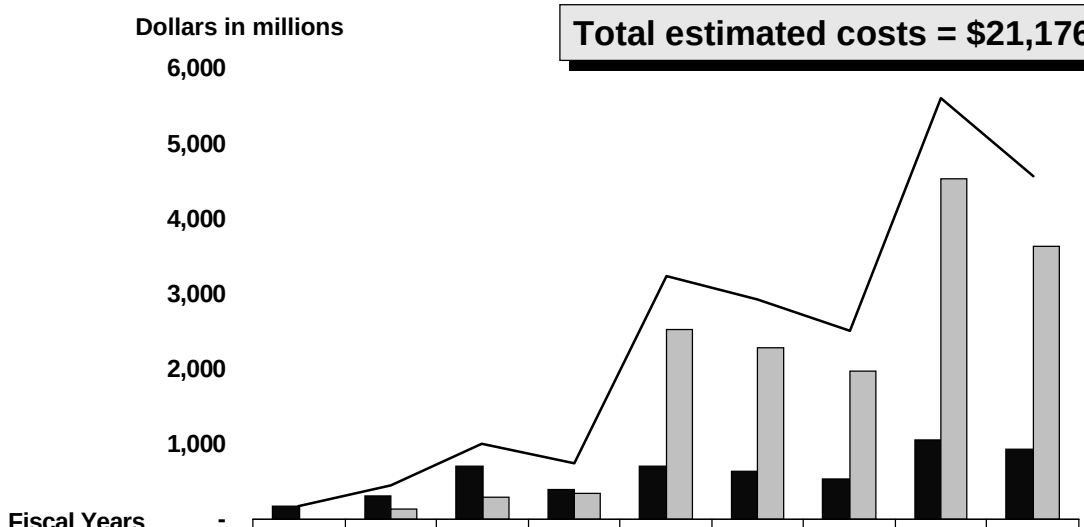
Will the international community provide the required resources?

According to the National Security Strategy, U.S. military forces should be used when important interests are at stake only if, among other things, the costs and risks of their employment are commensurate with the importance of U.S. interests, and they are likely to accomplish their objectives. In making a determination on these matters, key issues to consider include (1) the appropriate level of the U.S. military contribution relative to that of other NATO countries, (2) whether strategic and operational objectives for operations in the region have been clearly defined, and (3) whether the international community is willing and able to provide the necessary military and civilian resources for the operations.

The following three slides contain information on estimated U.S. costs for operations in the Balkans from fiscal years 1992 through 2000 and the relative contributions of the United States and other NATO allies to NATO air and ground operations in the Balkans.

GAO

Estimated U.S. Costs for Military and Civilian Operations in the Balkans, Fiscal Years 1992 Through 2000



	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Annual civilian costs[a]	$166	$315	$712	$390	$705[c]	$644[c]	$538	$1,059	$931
Annual DOD costs[b]	6	139	292	347	2,520	2,283	1,963	4,538	3,628
Annual total	$172	$454	$1,004	$737	$3,225	$2,927	$2,501	$5,597	$4,559

[a]Includes the U.S. Agency for International Development; the U.S. Information Agency; and the Departments of State, Agriculture, Commerce Justice, and the Treasury.

[b]DOD's incremental costs include the costs of operations in Croatia, Bosnia, Kosovo, and Macedonia.

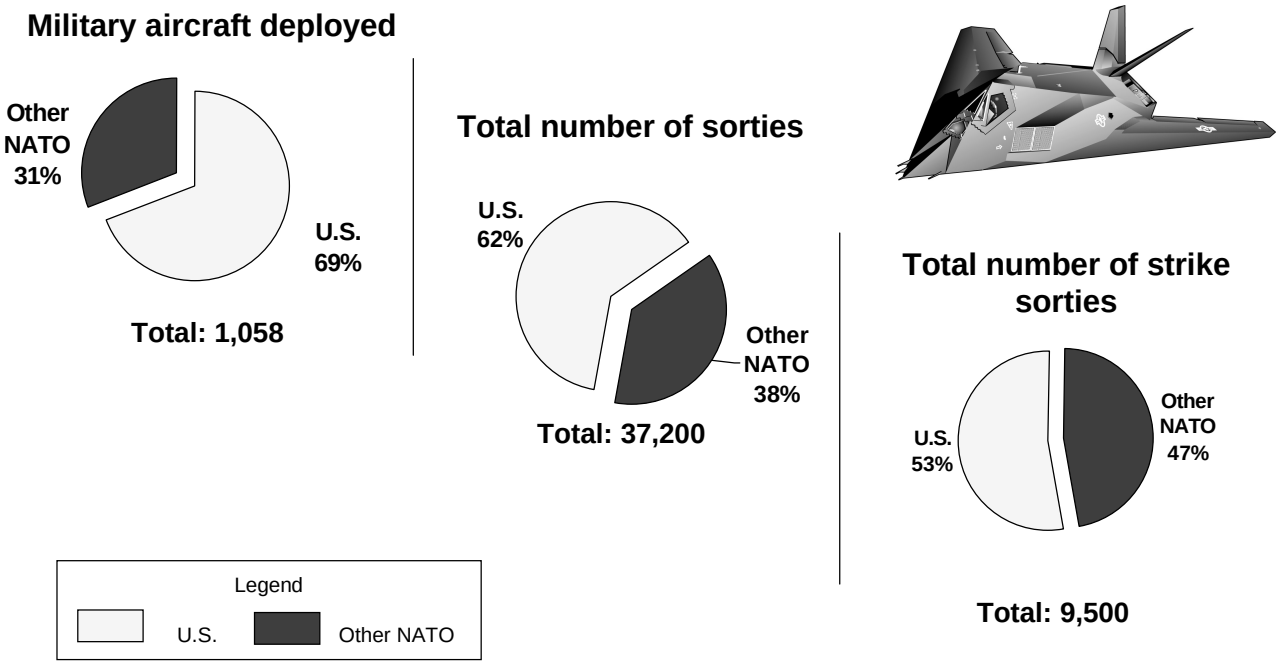
[c]In fiscal years 1996 and 1997, U.S. civilian cost estimates were available only for Bosnia and Albania. We used 1998 cost data for the remaining countries—about $100 million–to estimate civilian costs during fiscal years 1996 and 1997.

According to executive branch data, as of March 29, 2000, the United States will have provided about $21.2 billion to support efforts to stabilize the Balkans from fiscal years 1992 through 2000: about $15.7 billion in DOD incremental costs[4] for military-related operations, and about $5.5 billion for activities of civilian agencies. U.S. costs increased significantly in 1995 and again in 1999, when the United States first deployed military forces to Bosnia and Kosovo, respectively. By the end of fiscal year 2000, the United States will have spent an estimated $18.2 billion in these two locations, or about 86 percent of its total estimated costs. Furthermore, almost half–about 48 percent–of the estimated U.S. costs in the Balkans from fiscal year 1992 through 2000 will have been incurred in the last 2 years of this period. Appendix VI provides more information on U.S. costs for operations in the Balkans.

[4]As used in this report, "incremental costs" are those costs that would not have been incurred if it were not for the operation. It should be recognized that DOD's financial systems cannot reliably determine costs and only the total obligations are captured by DOD's accounting systems. The services use various management information systems to identify incremental obligations and to estimate costs. Although we use the term "costs" in this report, in the case of DOD, we are actually referring to DOD's obligation of funds.

GAO

U.S. and Non-U.S. Participation in Operation Allied Force, 1999



Note 1: DOD and NATO define a “sortie” as an operational flight by one aircraft.

Note 2: DOD and NATO define a “strike” as an attack intended to inflict damage on, seize, or destroy an objective.

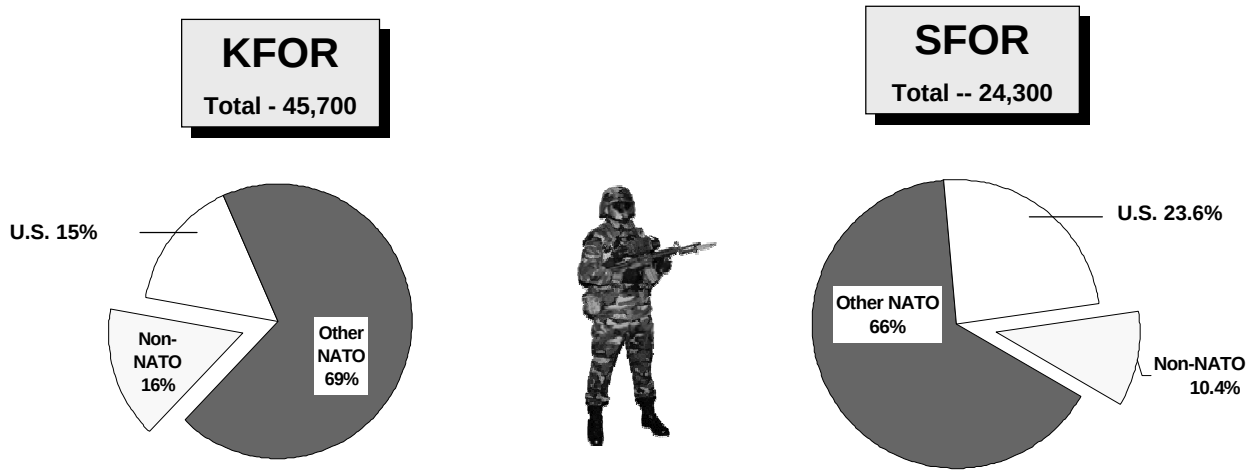
Note 3: “Support sorties” consist of both combat and noncombat missions. They include intelligence and reconnaissance, combat air patrols to protect strike missions, combat search and rescue, and aerial refueling.

Source: GAO analysis of DOD data.

At the height of Operation Allied Force, the 79-day NATO air campaign against Serbia and Montenegro, the air forces of the allied countries had about 1,058 aircraft deployed for the operation. The United States provided 731 aircraft, or 69 percent of the total. The United States also conducted over 23,200 of all sorties, or 62 percent of the total, and 5,035 strike sorties, or 53 percent.

GAO

Current and Possible Relative Contributions of U.S. and European Forces to Balkans Peace Operations



U.S. force protection requirements impact force levels.

No official link exists between recently proposed European military force and any changes in the relative contributions of U.S. and non-U.S. forces.

Note: SFOR and KFOR personnel numbers are as of January 2000.

Sources: GAO analysis of SFOR and KFOR data.

As of January 2000, NATO members had contributed about 60,150 troops, or 86 percent of both forces, to the two NATO-led forces in the Balkans. The remaining 9,850 troops were provided by 21 non-NATO countries, including 4,800 from Russia.

The United States—with about 12,800 troops in the two NATO-led forces–is the largest force provider to NATO-led operations in the Balkans. The next largest force provider, Italy, has contributed about 8,100 military personnel to these operations. The U.S. military currently provides about 15.4 percent and 23.6 percent of all military personnel in KFOR and SFOR, respectively, or 18 percent of the total military commitment to the Balkans. Americans hold the key NATO military positions that control the operation in Bosnia and, to a lesser extent, in Kosovo. While the SFOR commander is an American general officer, the KFOR commander is a European general officer.

The U.S. military has instituted and follows the most stringent force protection measures among NATO allies, according to U.S. and European military officials, measures that have a significant impact on the number of troops needed for U.S. operations. For example, in Bosnia, the U.S. military employs up to 55 percent of its ground combat forces on "presence patrols" and 40 percent on duties associated with force protection.[5] In contrast, according to a senior U.K. defense official, the United Kingdom generally devotes 14 percent of its ground combat forces to force protection. This relatively small force protection requirement allows the United Kingdom to conduct operations with fewer troops on the ground.

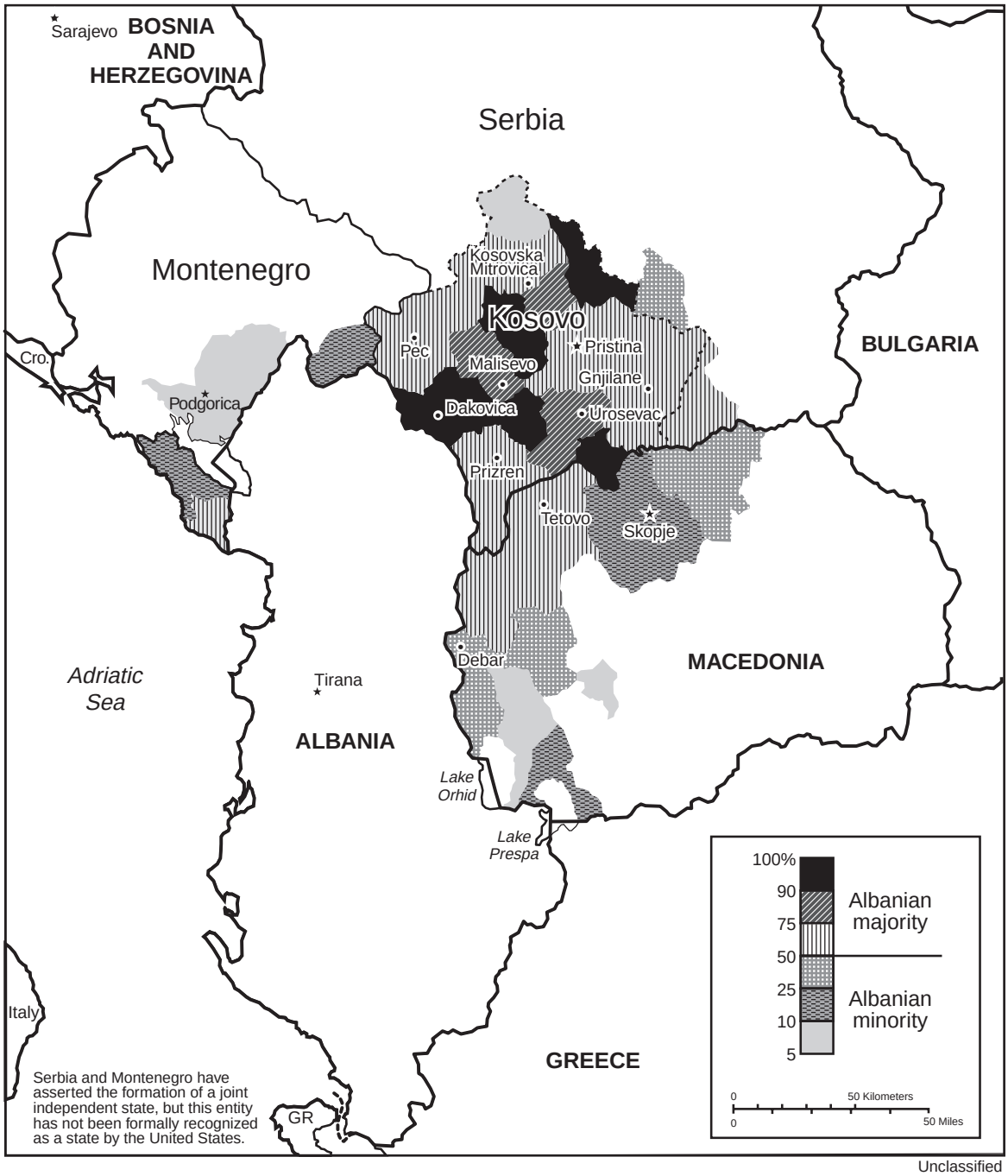
In December 1999, member nations of the European Council of the European Union agreed that by 2003 they should be able to deploy and sustain a force of up to 50,000-60,000 troops. As currently envisioned, these forces should be capable of a full range of military missions and tasks, including the most demanding, and should also be able to deploy within 60 days and be sustained for at least 1 year. However, there has been no official link between the development of this European military force and European agreement to the eventual withdrawal of U.S. military forces from the Balkans once the European force is established. Over the past 2 years, U.S. and European military and civilian officials have told us that if the United States were to withdraw its military personnel from Bosnia, European countries would follow and withdraw their troops.

[5]According to a senior SFOR officer, these percentages reflect tactical situations that dictate heightened force protection measures; the general situation for U.S. troops in Bosnia requires a significantly lower percentage of the force to be dedicated to force protection. Further, the U.S. military is reducing the number of soldiers dedicated to guarding base camps by installing electronic surveillance and monitoring devices to provide early warning.

Distribution of Ethnic Albanians in the Former Yugoslavia

This appendix contains a map showing the distribution of ethnic Albanians in the former Yugoslavia, as of February 1999 (see fig. 2). We note that the distribution of ethnic groups in Kosovo has changed significantly since then. Many areas of the province have become almost all ethnic Albanian due to the displacement of non-Albanians within and from the province since the end of the NATO airstrikes. Updated population figures, however, were not available for this report.

Figure 2: Distribution of Ethnic Albanians in the Former Yugoslavia, as of February 1999



Source: Central Intelligence Agency.

Bosnia Peace Operation

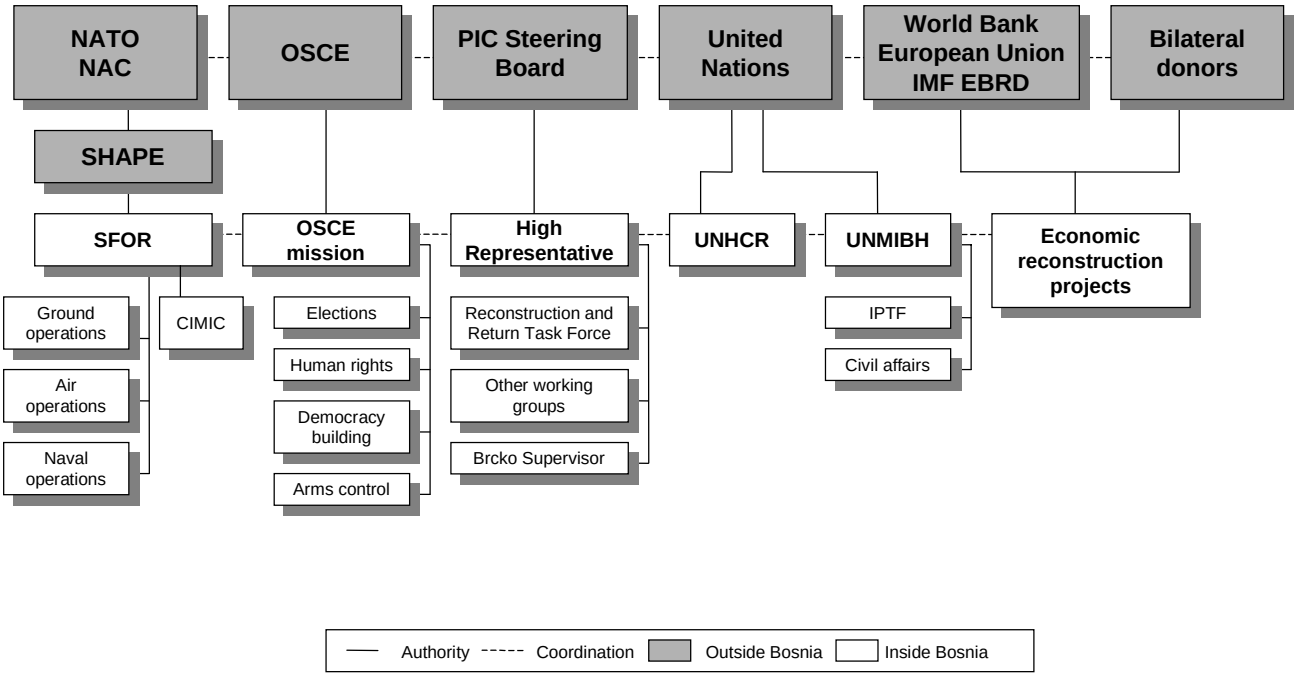
This appendix provides information on the organization of civilian and military efforts in the Bosnia peace operation. Figure 3 is a map of Bosnia detailing (1) ethnic distribution; (2) the "interentity boundary line" that divides the country's two entities–the Federation and the Republika Srpksa; (3) the location and division of the three military sectors of the Stabilization Force (SFOR); and (4) the Brcko district.[1] Figure 4 shows the organization of military and civilian operations in Bosnia. Figure 5 shows the SFOR organization as of January 2000.

[1]Because the warring parties were unable to agree on which of Bosnia's ethnic groups would control the strategically important area in and around the city of Brcko, the Dayton Agreement instead called for an arbitration tribunal to decide this issue. On February 14, 1997, the tribunal called for the international community to designate a supervisor under the auspices of the Office of the High Representative, who would establish an interim supervisory administration for the Brcko area. In the final arbitration award of March 5, 1999, the tribunal determined that the international supervisory regime must continue in force indefinitely in the Brcko area and gave the supervisor responsibility for scheduling and implementing the establishment of a new "Brcko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina." The district was established on March 8, 2000.

Figure 3: Map of Bosnia



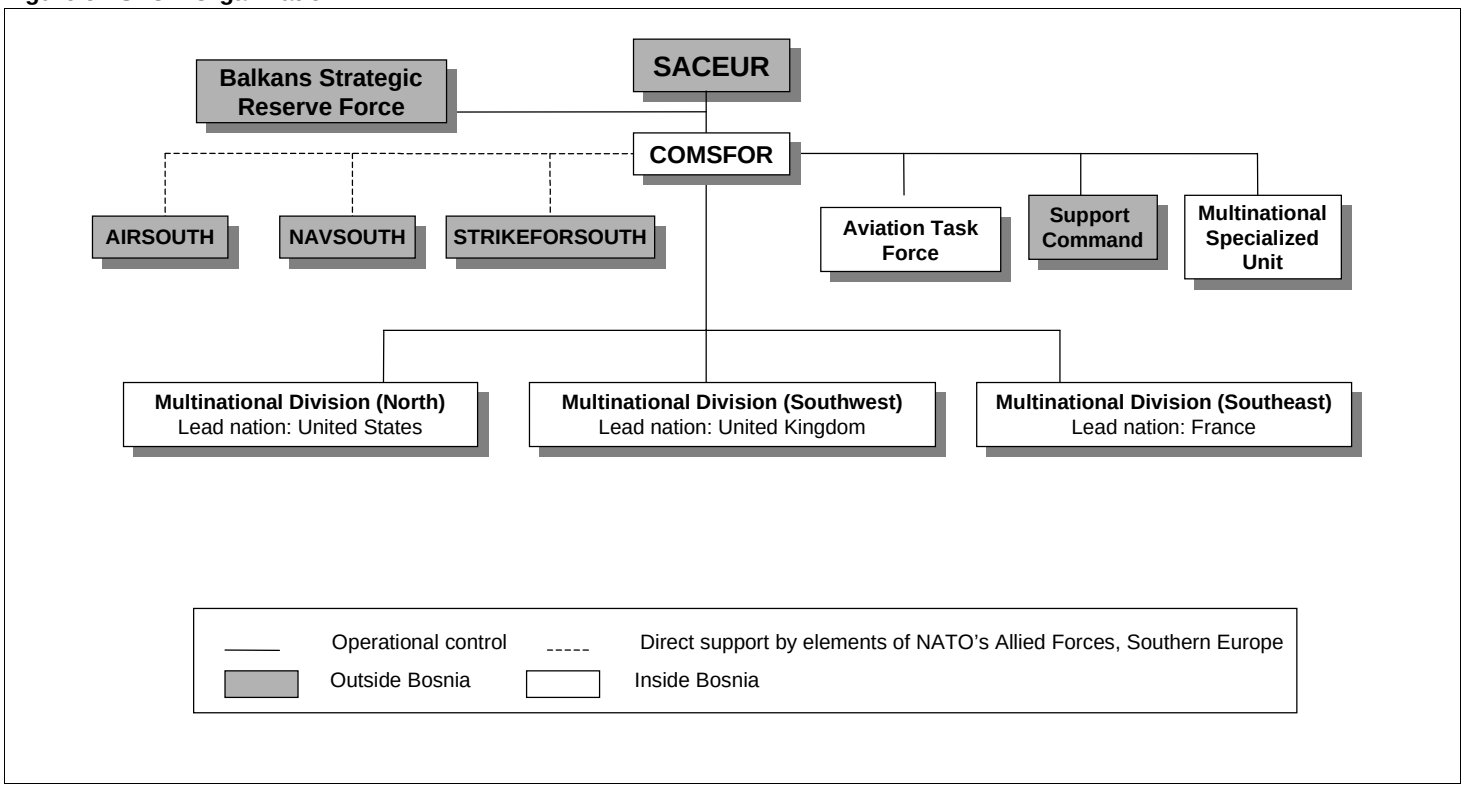
Figure 4: Organization of Military and Civilian Operations in Bosnia



Legend
CIMIC = Civil Military Cooperation
EBRD = European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
IMF = International Monetary Fund
IPTF = International Police Task Force
NAC = North Atlantic Council
OSCE = Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PIC = Peace Implementation Council
SHAPE = Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe
UNMIBH = United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina
UNHCR = United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Note: Coordination in Bosnia occurs at all levels of among these organizations.

Figure 5: SFOR Organization



Legend
AIRSOUTH = Allied Air Forces, Southern Europe
COMSFOR = Commander, Stabilization Force
NAVSOUTH = Allied Naval Forces, Southern Europe
SACEUR= Supreme Allied Commander Europe
STRIKEFORSOUTH = Naval Striking and Support Forces, Southern Europe

Note: The Aviation Task Force is a dual function unit that provides SFOR operational reserve for all of Bosnia and sector support for the U.S.-led Multinational Division (North).

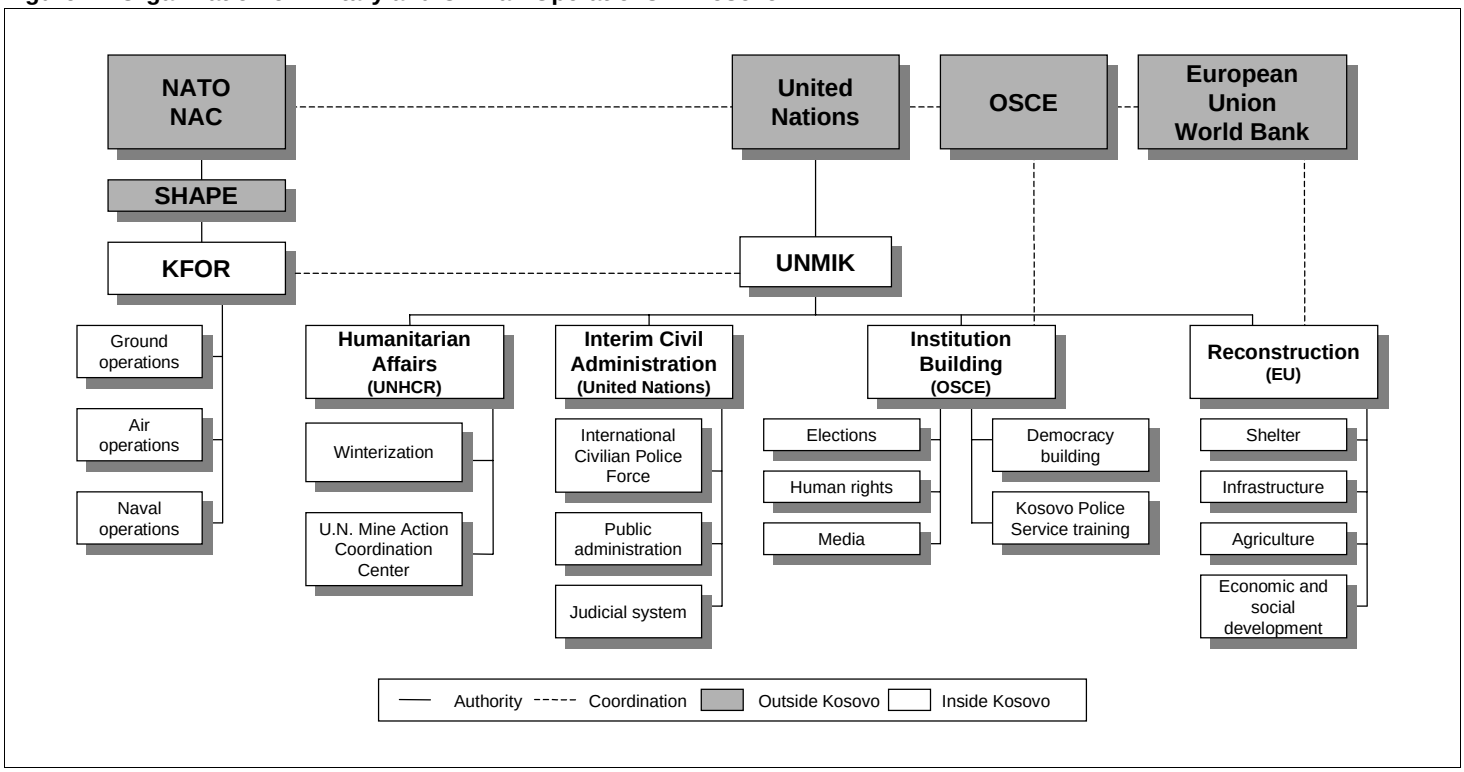
Kosovo Peace Operation

This appendix provides information on the organization of civilian and military efforts in the Kosovo peace operation. Figure 6 is a map of Kosovo detailing the location and division of the five military sectors of the Kosovo Force/International Security Force (KFOR). Figure 7 shows the organization of military and civilian operations in Kosovo. Figure 8 shows the KFOR organization as of January 2000.

Figure 6: KFOR Brigade Sectors in Kosovo



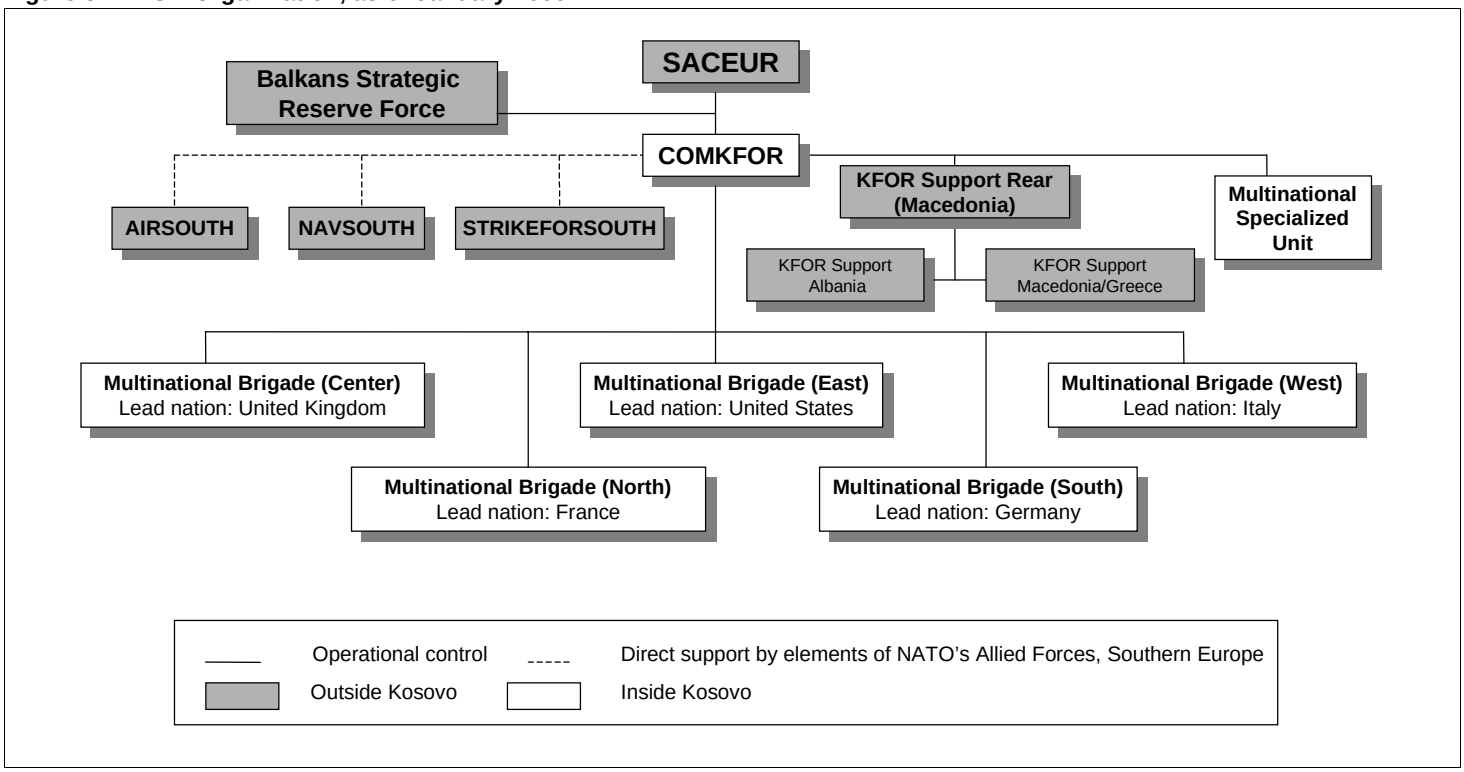
Figure 7: Organization of Military and Civilian Operations in Kosovo



Legend
EU = European Union
NAC = North Atlantic Council
OSCE = Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
SHAPE = Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe
UNMIK = United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo
UNHCR = United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Note: Coordination in Kosovo occurs at all levels among these organizations.

Figure 8: KFOR Organization, as of January 2000

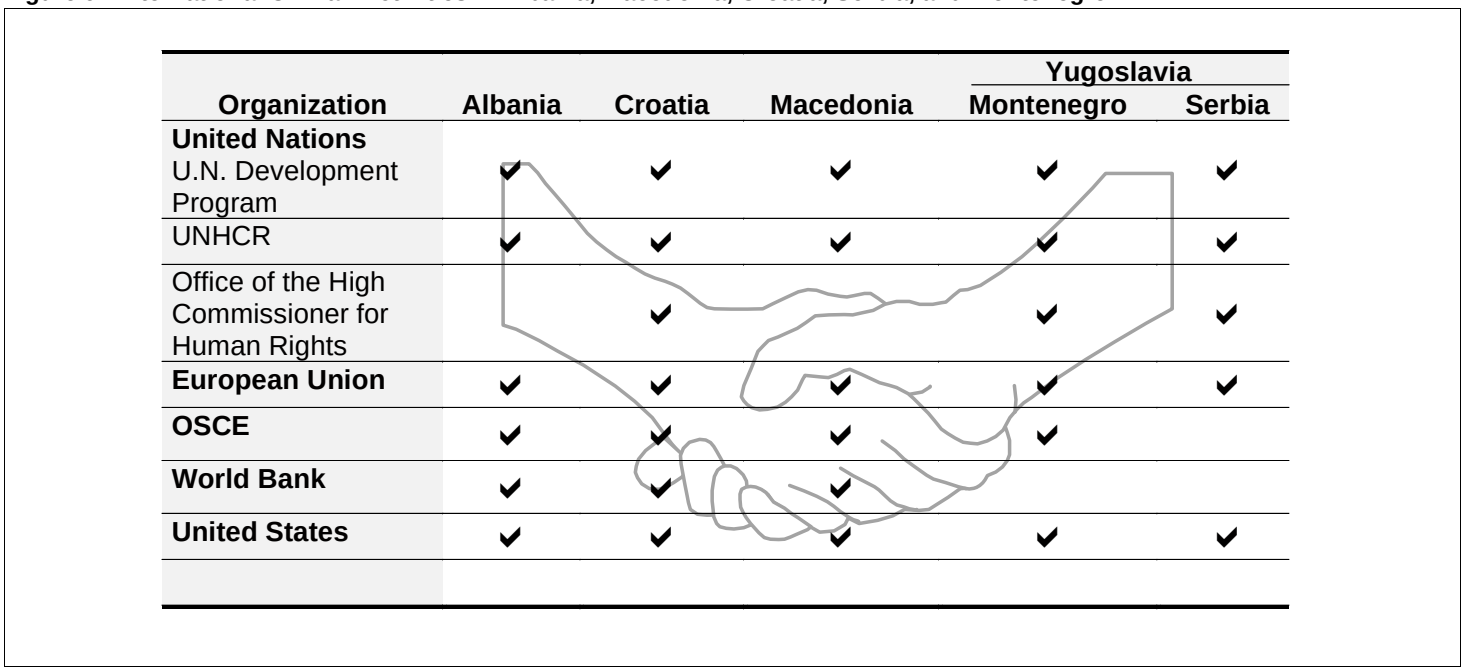


Legend
AIRSOUTH = Allied Air Forces, Southern Europe
COMKFOR = Commander Kosovo Force/International Security Force
NAVSOUTH = Allied Naval Forces, Southern Europe
SACEUR = Supreme Allied Commander Europe
STRIKEFORSOUTH = Naval Stiriking and Support Forces, Southern Europe

International Civilian Activities in Albania, Macedonia, Croatia, Serbia (Excluding Kosovo), and Montenegro

This appendix discusses the programs that the international community, including the United States, carries out to improve economic and political conditions in the Balkans region outside of Bosnia and Kosovo, specifically, in Albania, Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia, and Montenegro (see fig. 9).

Figure 9: International Civilian Activities in Albania, Macedonia, Croatia, Serbia, and Montenegro



Organization	Albania	Croatia	Macedonia	Yugoslavia	
				Montenegro	Serbia
United Nations U.N. Development Program	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
UNHCR	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights		✔		✔	✔
European Union	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
OSCE	✔	✔	✔	✔	
World Bank	✔	✔	✔		
United States	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔

Legend
OSCE = Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
UNHCR = U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees

Albania and Macedonia

The activities of the international agencies in Albania and Macedonia include providing and/or assisting with democratization and institution-building programs, economic restructuring, and the development and growth of the private sector. In addition, international agencies have provided humanitarian assistance for refugees, asylum seekers, and host families of refugees, to help Albania and Macedonia deal with the effects of the Kosovo crisis. The Kosovo crisis had a particularly overwhelming effect on both Albania and Macedonia. In Albania, one of the poorest countries in Europe, the crisis led to an influx of nearly 500,000 Kosovo refugees between March and June 1999. In Macedonia, the conflict led to nearly 300,000 refugees entering the country, hindered access to markets, and

blocked the movement of imports and exports. Macedonia has been affected most severely by the cessation of economic relations with Yugoslavia, previously Macedonia's largest trading partner and a conduit to other East, Central, and West European markets.

Croatia

International organizations have aimed primarily at developing democratic institutions and practices in Croatia and assisting in the return of refugees and displaced persons to their pre-war homes. The international community has restricted economic assistance and development funding to Croatia until it fulfills its commitments under the Dayton Agreement and makes economic reforms.

The parliamentary and presidential elections in early 2000 have provided great promise for a renewed commitment to political and economic reform in Croatia. In response to the election results, the U.S. Department of State has submitted a supplemental funding request for $35.7 million to encourage positive political and economic change under the new government. The U.S. government is considering extending other benefits as well, depending on progress achieved in political reform.

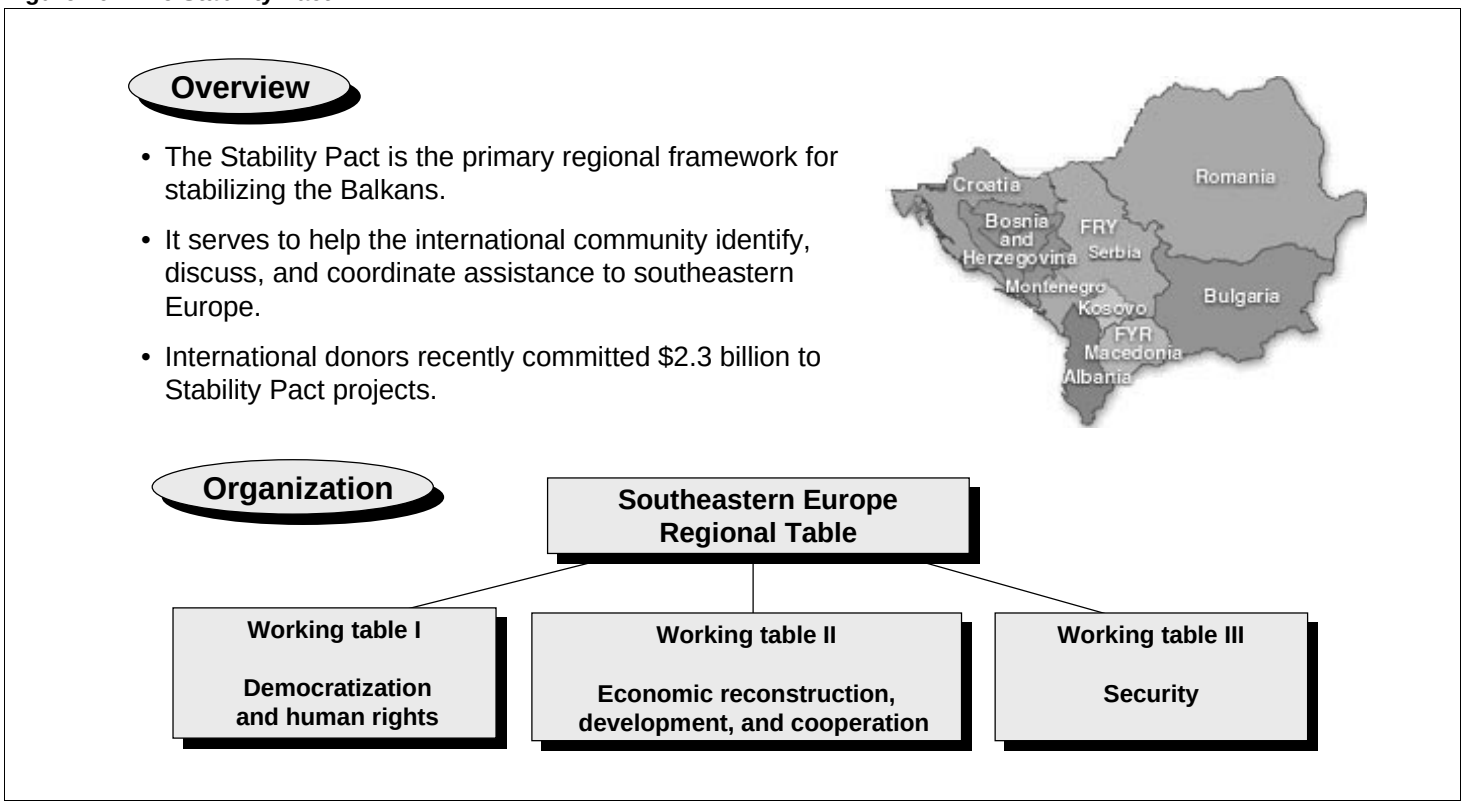
Serbia and Montenegro

Most international assistance to Serbia (excluding Kosovo) and Montenegro has been limited by trade and visa sanctions imposed by the United States and European Union in 1998 in response to the Yugoslav government's actions in Kosovo. U.S. assistance programs, as well as those of the international community, are structured around achievement of two strategic objectives: democratization assistance aimed at increased, better-informed citizen participation in political and economic decision-making; and humanitarian assistance to help Serbia and Montenegro deal with the effects of the Kosovo crisis. Activities related to these programs include encouraging the creation of participatory and effective civil society organizations, a more independent and responsive media, and legal systems that better support democratic processes and market reforms and providing assistance for refugees and internally displaced persons living in Montenegro and Serbia. While the United States does not have a formal presence in either Serbia or Montenegro, it does run a small assistance program for Serbia from U.S. offices in Budapest, Hungary, and for Montenegro from a U.S. office in Dubrovnik, Croatia.

The Stability Pact

The Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe is a framework for identifying, discussing, and coordinating the developmental assistance needs of the countries of southeastern Europe and accelerating and deepening the integration of a reformed region into the Euro-Atlantic community(see fig. 10). According to a senior U.S. official, the Stability Pact is a political commitment to a comprehensive, coordinated, and strategic approach to the region. Initiated by the European Union on June 10, 1999, the Stability Pact's major participants include Albania, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Romania, Russia, Slovenia, Macedonia, Turkey, the United States, Canada, Japan, the European Union, and several multilateral organizations and lending institutions, including the United Nations, NATO, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank.

Figure 10: The Stability Pact



Legend
FRY = Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
FYR Macedonia = Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

The overall objectives of the Stability Pact are to

- secure lasting peace, prosperity, and stability for southeastern Europe;
- foster effective regional cooperation and good-neighborly relations through strict observance of the principles of the Helsinki Final Act of 1975;[1]
- create vibrant market economies based on sound macroeconomic policies; and
- integrate the countries of southeastern Europe fully into the European and Atlantic cooperation structures, primarily the European Union.

To achieve these objectives, a governing body has been established, known as the "Southeastern Europe Regional Table," to oversee three working groups, called "working tables." The working tables have established workplans that identify priorities as well as key initiatives and projects that they intend to address.

In late March 2000, international donors pledged more than $2.3 billion to Stability Pact projects aimed at developing infrastructure; promoting private sector development; supporting policy and institutional reforms; and encouraging democratization, reconciliation, and security. Included in this amount is $1.7 billion devoted to financing a comprehensive "Quick Start" package for regional projects and initiatives over the next 12 months. Despite this funding, the Stability Pact may be unable to meet the growing expectations of the countries in southeastern Europe. According to a senior Stability Pact official, many countries in the region expect the Stability Pact to provide a great deal of funding for an almost unlimited number of projects.

[1]The Helsinki Final Act of 1975, also referred to as the Helsinki Accords, is a nonbinding agreement that outlines a broad basis for peaceful relations in Europe. It includes provisions related to confidence building measures, commercial exchanges, and human rights.

U.S. Military and Civilian Costs for Operations in the Balkans, Fiscal Years 1992 Through 2000

This appendix contains detailed information on U.S. civilian and military costs in support of Balkans operations and other activities to stabilize the region from 1992 through the year 2000. Table 1 details the total Department of Defense (DOD) and civilian agency spending in Bosnia and Kosovo. Table 2 delineates the total DOD and civilian agency spending in other areas of the Balkans.

Table 1: Estimated Costs of U.S. Operations in Bosnia and Kosovo, Fiscal Years 1992 Through 2000

Dollars in millions

	Fiscal years									
Country	**1992**	**1993**	**1994**	**1995**	**1996**	**1997**	**1998**	**1999**	**2000**	**Total**
Bosnia										
DOD[a]	$6	$139	$292	$347	$2,520	$2,283	$1,963	$1,538[b]	$1,603	**$10,691**
Civilian agencies	[c]	[c]	[c]	[c]	560[d]	500[d]	301	295	211	**1,867**
Subtotal	6	139	292	347	3,080	2,783	2,264	1,833	1,814	**12,558**
Kosovo										
DOD	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,000[e]	2,025	**5,025**
Civilian agencies	[c]	[c]	[c]	[c]	[f]	[f]	34[g]	256	302	**592**
Subtotal	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**34**	**3,256**	**2,327**	**5,617**
Total	**$6**	**$139**	**$292**	**$347**	**$3080**	**$2,783**	**$2,298**	**$5,089**	**$4,141**	**$18,175**

[a]DOD costs from 1992 to 1995 include support for humanitarian airdrops over Bosnia, operation of a hospital in Croatia, the airlift of food and supplies to Sarajevo, enforcing a no-fly zone over Bosnia, and airstrikes in Bosnia but do not include munitions expended in these operations. DOD costs from 1996 to 1998 include over $40 million spent on U.S. participation in a U.N. peacekeeping operation in Macedonia.

[b]DOD's cumulative incremental costs as of September 1999 include Operation Joint Forge and Operation Deliberate Forge.

[c]Civilian costs from 1992 to 1995 include funding from the State Department, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and the Departments of Transportation and Treasury for the former Yugoslavia as a whole and are not delineated by country (see table 2).

[d]This figure represents the State Department's cost estimate as of 1996. It includes costs for the U.S. Agency for International Development, the U.S. Information Agency, and the Departments of State, Agriculture, Commerce, Justice, and the Treasury.

[e]DOD's cumulative incremental costs as of September 1999 include Operations Balkan Calm, Joint Guardian, Allied Force, Eagle Eye, and Sustain Hope.

[f]Assistance in fiscal year 1996 and fiscal year 1997 is included in a U.S. Agency for International Development estimate of total assistance to the Balkans (see table 2).

[g]Figure includes civilian agency costs for all of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the bulk of which was dedicated to U.S. programs in Kosovo.

Sources: State Department and DOD cost estimates.

Table 2: Estimated Costs of U.S. Operations in the Balkans, Except in Bosnia and Kosovo, Fiscal Years 1996 Through 2000

Dollars in millions

	Fiscal years									
Country	**1992**	**1993**	**1994**	**1995**	**1996**	**1997**	**1998**	**1999**	**2000**	**Total**
Albania	$45[a]	$45[a]	$45[a]	$45[a]	$45[a]	$44[a]	$31	$82	$36	**$418**
Croatia	[b]	[b]	[b]	[b]	[c]	[c]	25	23	21	**69**
Macedoniad	[e]	[e]	[e]	[e]	[c]	[c]	49	82	36	**167**
Montenegro	[e]	[e]	[e]	[e]	[c]	[c]	[f]	39	51	**90**
Serbia	[e]	[e]	[e]	[e]	[c]	[c]	[f]	21	33	**54**
Regional civilian costs	121[e]	270[e]	667[e]	345[e]	100[c]	100[c]	98	261	241	**2,203**
Total	**$166**	**$315**	**$712**	**$390**	**$145**	**$144**	**$203**	**$508**	**$418**	**$3,001**

[a]The total U.S. assistance to Albania for fiscal years 1992 to 1998 is $300 million and for fiscal year 1998 alone is $31 million. To represent these costs over several years, we have estimated that the United States spent an average of $45 million each year for fiscal years 1992 through 1996 and $44 million in fiscal year 1997.

[b]DOD's reported incremental costs for the operation of a hospital in Croatia in fiscal years 1992 to 1995 are included in its Bosnia costs (see table 1).

[c]Based on regional civilian costs in 1998 of $98 million, we estimated that the United States spent $100 million in regional assistance to the Balkans outside of Bosnia in 1996 and 1997.

[d]DOD's reported incremental costs for U.S. participation in a U.N. peacekeeping operation in Macedonia in fiscal years 1996-1998 are included in its Bosnia costs (see table 1).

[e]Civilian costs from 1992 to 1995 include funding from the State Department, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and the Departments of Transportation and Treasury for the former Yugoslavia as a whole and are not delineated by country.

[f]Civilian agency costs for Montenegro and Serbia in 1998 are included under Kosovo in table 1.

Sources: State Department and DOD cost estimates.

Comments From the Department of Defense

Note: GAO comments supplementing those in the report text appear at the end of this appendix.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
2000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-2000

POLICY

APR - 6 2000

Mr. Benjamin F. Nelson
Director, International Relations and Trade Issues
National Security and International Affairs Division
U.S. General Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Nelson:

This is the Department of Defense (DoD) response to the General Accounting Office (GAO) draft final report, "BALKANS SECURITY: Current and Projected Factors Affecting Regional Stability," dated 4 April 2000 (GAO Code 711385/OSD Case 1969).

The report represents a factual account of our current involvement in the Balkans. Suggested technical changes for clarity and accuracy have been provided separately.

However, the draft final report does reflect a critical and possibly misleading interpretation of the National Security Strategy (NSS) and its treatment of national interests, which centers on the GAO understanding of "abiding" as used in the NSS. In the narrative portion, the report correctly identifies our three categories of interests: vital, important, and humanitarian and other. The report asserts later in that discussion that, "The [NSS] also describes 'peace in the Balkans and Southeastern Europe' as an 'abiding' interest, rather than as vital, important, or humanitarian. The [NSS] provides no information on when or how U.S. military forces would be used when this ***type*** (emphasis mine) of interest is at stake." Slide V.1 clearly misrepresents the three categories of national interests by including "abiding" and omitting "humanitarian and other." There is a clear implication that the Administration has created a fourth type of interest and never bothered to define it. "Abiding" is not another "type" of interest; it is simply an adjective indicating our continued interest in that area, an interest first taken in 1917. In the NSS, the full sentence reads, "The United States has an abiding interest in peace in this region because continued instability there threatens European security." The identified interest here is clearly instability threatening European security – a vital interest in and of itself. Finally, the report erroneously states that the NSS does not link humanitarian interests to the Balkans. Aside from clear statements made by various Administration senior officials during the Kosovo crisis, I would direct you to the NSS discussion of Kosovo and Serbia-Montenegro as a clear connection to the humanitarian interest as defined in the NSS.

The Department appreciates the opportunity to comment on the final draft report.

Sincerely yours,

Walter B. Slocombe

See comment 1.

See comment 2.

See comment 3.

The following are GAO's comments on DOD's letter dated April 6, 2000.

GAO Comments

1. We have deleted the word "abiding" from the slide to ensure that it is not mistaken as a category of U.S. national interests.

2. We have clarified the text by specifying the three categories of national interests to ensure that the term abiding is not included as a type or category of U.S. national interests. We also added DOD's discussion of the U.S. abiding interest in the Balkans to the text of the report on page 61.

3. We modified the narrative on page 62 to say that the National Security Strategy does not directly link humanitarian interests to the Balkans region, although executive branch officials on many occasions have cited humanitarian interests there. We also added to the text specific examples of humanitarian interests from the strategy.

GAO Contacts and Staff Acknowledgments

GAO Contacts

Harold J. Johnson, Jr. (202) 512-4128
Judith A. McCloskey (202) 512-4128

Acknowledgments

In addition to those named, above E. Jeanette Espínola, M. Elizabeth Guran, B. Patrick Hickey, and Jody L. Woods also made key contributions to this report.

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