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After Dayton: Building Peace in the Balkans

Marie Janine Calic
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By Dr. Marie-Janine Calic*

One year after the signing of the Dayton Accords concerns about the “unfinished peace” in the Balkans are growing¹. While most of the military tasks seem to be successfully completed, many civilian objectives are still delayed. This confirms a general lesson from different post-conflict situations: rebuilding war-torn societies and disintegrated states is far more complex, demanding and costly than was ending the hostilities. A fragile cease-fire must be transformed into a lasting political settlement, humanitarian aid must be provided, and a process of political, economic, social and psychological reconstruction must be initiated to lay the basis for future sustainable development. These enormous tasks expose the international community to particular strains and challenges and require well-defined policies and effective co-ordination. In a comprehensive study the UN Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) comes to the conclusion that the rebuilding of war-torn societies require the pursuit of at least five main objectives: demilitarization, humanitarian an emergency relief, political reconstruction, social reconstruction and economic reconstruction.²

Meanwhile, the international community is still in the process of “learning by doing”. While much attention has been devoted to the origins of wars, the question of how war-torn societies can be rebuilt has, for a long time, received far less consideration. It was the Secretary General of the UN, Boutros Boutros-Ghali who, in “An Agenda for Peace”, has identified post-conflict peace building as one of the major challenges that the international community faces. The concept, which was further concreted in the “Supplement to an Agenda for Peace” in 1995, intends the ‘institutionalization of peace’ as a condition to prevent the recurrence of new conflicts. Thus, the ultimate goal of post-conflict peace building is “ to prevent violent conflict from reemerging and to rebuild the capabilities of a society to resolve conflict without fighting”³. Therefore, post-conflict peacebuilding is a political undertaking *per se* even though it may also comprise humanitarian, socio-economic, and human right tasks.

In recent years, a substantial amount of experience in a number of international peacebuilding missions has been produced and scientifically reviewed⁴. Although a number of operational questions still remain open, this paper attempts to derive lessons from different (successful and unsuccessful) peacebuilding experiences and to suggest some policy recommendations in

1 Unfinished Peace. Report of the International Commission on the Balkans, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace/Aspen Institute: Washington, D. C. 1996.

² UNRISD, Rebuilding War-Torn Societies, Geneva, March 1995.

³ Winrich Kuhne, Winning the Peace. Concept and Lessons Learned of Post-conflict Peacebuilding. International Workshop, Berlin, July 4-6, 1996, p. xvii.

⁴ Volker Matthies (ed.), Vom Krieg zum Frieden. Kriegsbeendigung und Friedenskonsolidierung, Bremen 1995, pp. 8-38.

the concrete operational setting of the Balkans. It shall be argued that Bosnia and Herzegovina will need long-term international assistance (humanitarian aid, peace-keeping, reconstruction and development assistance) in order to overcome the effects of the war and to rebuild the society.

1. Providing Security

A crucial element of any peacebuilding operation is to provide a secure environment in which the society can return safely to normality. No rebuilding is possible without a minimal degree of security and stability. In Bosnia this has been more or less achieved: The NATO-led IFOR, in a few months, has succeeded in implementing key military aspects of the Dayton Accords. It has overseen the establishment of the Inter-Entity Boundary Line (IEBL), the Zones of Separation, the removal of heavy weapons, followed by the move of forces into transferred areas and, most recently, by the placement of heavy weapons in collection sites. The IFOR presence has, moreover, contributed to stabilizing the situation generally so that the elections could be held and refugees be returned to some areas. However, there is still an enormous gap between the implementation of the military provisions and the realization of the political tasks. Fundamental political provisions have not been translated into practice, such as the establishment of the political institutions of Bosnia and the two entities (the Republika Srpska and the Federation), the repatriation of some two million refugees and the removal of war criminals from public life. Above all, the leaderships of the former conflicting parties are still reluctant to co-operate on a productive basis.

Most experts agree that the withdraw of the NATO forces after the originally envisaged period of one year would endanger the whole peace process and could, in the long run, even lead to a resumption of fighting. And none of the peacebuilding measures can start to have an impact as long as the question of internal security remains open. Although any post-IFOR planning, originally, had been put under taboo, consensus appeared to be growing over the planning of a post-IFOR Stabilization Force (SFOR). By the end of 1996, it seems to be clear that mandate, composition and structure of this reduced stabilization force of about 30,000 troops will resemble its predecessor. Other options, such as a Western European Union directed force or a Gulf War-style ad hoc coalition under a lead nation, are out of the question, at least for the next 188 months⁵.

Meanwhile, some fundamental security risks cannot be handled in an appropriate way or cannot be dealt at all. One short-coming IFOR's current mandate is the lack of inter-linkages between military and civilian components on the ground. The high degree of separation of roles between the military parts of the operation have created a vacuum in which many urgent problems remain unsolved. For example, there is no real authority which could provide the safe return of the refugees. While NATO-Forces do not feel mandated to

⁵Charles Barry, "After IFOR: Maintaining a Fragile Peace in the Balkans", in : Strategic Forum 62 (1996).

do so, the UN-led International Police Task force IPTF is neither allowed nor equipped to perform enforcement. IFOR commanders, moreover, have been reluctant to locate and apprehend persons accused of war crimes. This can be explained by the fear for the security of the peace force and/or by a policy of avoiding mission creep into political roles. But the fact that even prominent political leaders accused of war crimes (e. g. Radovan Karadzic) can move around and even pass IFOR check points without being arrested deeply damages the image and the credibility of IFOR. Last but not least, there is no efficient force that would provide local order and stability, as the primary security concern comes from the micro-level rather than from the organized military forces. The Norwegian NUPI institute in a recent report came to the conclusion that the most demanding security risk at the moment is not the task of keeping the armies of the parties apart, but rather that of dealing with criminals and armed bands dedicating themselves to looting, robbery, and destruction⁶. Therefore, it should be considered whether or not the new stabilization force should be allowed to fulfill or at least actively support non-military tasks.

NATO commanders have always been cautious about introducing new non-military tasks in order to avoid a process of "Unproforization", that is mission creep. Nevertheless, IFOR was, after a few months, opened up to an extended number of tasks. This was a consequence of the fact that there was obviously less resistance on the ground than had been expected. Step by step, a certain but moderate mission creep took place, for instance by establishing liaison offices to other international organizations and NGOs or by assisting in transport and communication tasks. "the story of IFORs first months is precisely a story about mission creep...The only alternative to mission creep was probably mission erosion"⁷

The question of whether or not IFOR's tasks should be further expanded leads to a classical peacebuilding dilemma generated by tensions between the immediate aim of preventing a resumption of fighting and the long-term peacebuilding needs⁸. It has been observed on numerous occasions that diplomats and politicians fear to insist on the immediate implementation of certain civilian provisions because this might provoke the leadership to undermine the whole peace process. It has been argued that the apprehension of war criminals, the return of refugees, and even the implementation of basic human rights in general, might lead to a complete refusal of the Bosnian Serbs to co-operate with the international community and/or aggravate tensions between the Federation partners, the Bosnian Muslims and the Croats. For this reason, many decision makers are of opinion

⁶ From Blue to Green. The Transition from UNPROFOR to IFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina, , NUPI, Oslo, December 1995.

⁷ Espen Barth Eide/Per Erik Solli, "Implementing Peace»: Some Reflections on the Early Days of the Dayton Year, Oslo:NUPI, August 1996, p. 15.

⁸Eva Bertram, "Reinventing Governments. The Promise and Perils of United Nations Peace Building", in: Journal of Conflict Resolution, Vol. 39, No. 3, September 1995, p. 387-418 (396).

that even massive violations of the peace accord should sometimes be tolerated in order to deter the emergence of new conflicts. The rule of law is, however, a fundamental element in the process of rebuilding a state, restoring confidence and creating reliability and accountability while the search for "peace first" risks undermining the long term aim of eliminating the root causes of conflict and creating the conditions for a sustainable peace. It should be understood, therefore, that securing peace and advancing the rule of law should be part of the same process.

An additional instrument to provide regional stability is sub-regional arms control, as suggested by the Dayton Accords. But eleven months after the signing of the Vienna Agreement of 21 January 1996 the question of whether or not the envisaged Confidence and Security Building Measures will be successfully implemented is still open. As of December 1996, there have been several shortcomings both in the overall questions of implementing the verification regime, and in the details of implementation, with some improvements in recent months. Non-compliance has been observed mostly in connection with obligations which relate to the status of the parties' relations to each other, such as the deployment of Military Liaison Missions to each others' military headquarters. While, in general, parties appear reluctant to abide by the provisions of the Vienna Agreement, it is still unclear whether non-compliance derives from a lack of technical capabilities or from a lack of political will. A considerable part of CSBMs have not been applicable until now because the deadline has not yet been reached. Moreover, it remains to be seen if a regional arms control regime will be concluded.

As long as compliance with the subregional arms control regime is not yet guaranteed, a policy of moderation on the part of arms exporting countries seems inevitable in order to stabilize the fragile Bosnian peace. However, the US believes that Croat and Bosnian forces will need arms and training to establish military and provide for self-defence. Under a military assistance program some \$100 million shall be provided, establishing a military balance on the basis of mutual deterrence. Bosnian army and Croat Forces (HVO) commanders have already made agreements on the future training and arming of their respective forces. European experts, on the other hand, maintaining that arms control agreements can better serve the purpose and that a large influx of weapons might endanger the gradual consolidation of peace. Recent weeks have seen several cases of non-compliance by the Bosnian Serbs who argued that the American Arm and Equip-Programme would create a new imbalance of power in favor of the Federation. It thus appears that the Council of the European Union was not unwise in deciding that during the period of the deployment of IFOR and UNTAES (the UN peacekeeping-force in Eastern Slovenia) the EU embargo on arms, munitions and military equipment will be maintained towards Bosnia, Croatia and the Fry.

2. Creating New State Structures

In every post-conflict situation there is an immediate need for a framework of state structures. This means that sovereignty has to be reconstituted and that an effective interim government-like is needed at the top which is able to restore state institutions. It is, at the same time, a precondition for social and political reconstruction of the society⁹. Sovereignty does not only mean making the state function, but needs at the same time to be understood as a requirement for democratization and power control. However, as long as the survival of the state as such is contested, and power structures are fragmented, the prospects for democratization remain dim.

Although the military and political power in Bosnia was highly fragmented, the Dayton Agreement reaffirmed the sovereignty of the Bosnian state. In order to create new state institutions the General Framework Agreement envisaged democratic elections to be held within a time frame of 9 months after the signing of the peace accords. While "Rules and Regulations" for the elections have been established by an OSCE-led commission, many practical problems remained unsolved. Most of them were related to the question of whether or not millions of refugees and displaced persons would be allowed to return to their homes, as provided by the Dayton Agreement.

There is also a general problem related to elections in ethnically fragment states. Many believe that the easiest way to create new state institutions is democratic elections. However, democratization in highly fragmented states often implies encouraging ethnic identities and nationalistic feelings, at least as long as the basis for a common national identity does not yet exist. In conflict-ridden countries, there is an inherent danger that early elections can strengthen nationalist or separatist forces rather than promote state integration. Democratization "is a highly disruptive process in itself: it encourages the conflicts that exist in a collapsing state to manifest themselves freely, but without the restraint of the checks and balances, and of agreement on the basis rules, that regulate conflict and make it manageable in a well-established democratic system"¹⁰.

Many examples confirm that elections can even state collapse. The participants of an international workshop on peacebuilding, leading staff members of UN missions and other organizations involved in post-conflict peacebuilding, recently came to the conclusion, that elections should not be held earlier than two or three years after a war¹¹.

⁹ I. William Zartman, "Putting States Together" , in: I. William Zartman (ed.), *Collapsed States. The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority*, London 1995, pp. 267-273.

¹⁰ Marina Ottaway, "Democratization in Collapsed States", in: William Zartman (ed.), *Collapsed States. The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority*, London 1995, pp. 235-249 (235)

¹¹ *Winning the Peace*, p. xxvi

It was interesting to note that most of the loudest statements against the OSCE's rules came from multi-ethnic or anti-nationalistic groups and parties. They argued that the rules would serve to consolidate the results of ethnic cleansing and would be beneficial to nationalist parties. Voters in Bosnia had indeed little choice but to vote on the basis of ethnicity, which automatically reinforced the tendency towards territorial fragmentation. During the elections campaign there was a large influence of the powerful nationalist parties SDA, HDZ and SDS, while the few multi-ethnic oriented parties were completely marginalized. These parties, moreover, did not compete on the basis of a unified state, but tried to gain monopolistic control over separated and ethnically defined territories which they consider as being "theirs" in this sense, there was no real pluralistic competition. But also other conditions for free and fair elections in Bosnia were not in place: there was (and still is) no freedom of movement and in both entities the media were (and still are) controlled by the respective authorities, while opposition parties have had no real access to the official broadcast media, which were, particularly in rural areas, the only means of information on the elections¹². Nevertheless, policy makers continued to maintain that the elections should be held. They argued that setting up of the common Bosnian institutions was the core of the efforts to overcome the country's partition¹³. Though the Bosnian elections were accompanied by a relatively low level of violence, they, more or less, confirmed the old leaderships and did not lead to the creation of new state institutions. At the end of 1996, there is still no functioning central government's claim to authority remains contested by the two Bosnian entities, the Federation and the Republika Srpska. A second key problem is the ongoing power struggle between Croat and Muslim authorities which endangers the viability of the Muslim-Croat Federation. The envisaged transfer of competencies from the authorities of the former para-state of Herzeg Bosna and those of the Bosnian government to the Federation has not been completed. The implementation of cantons and constituencies has been delayed and internal borderlines have not been defined. The necessary unification of different customs and tax systems did not yet materialize. There is no freedom of movement in most parts of the Federation. Furthermore, the unification of Mostar has virtually failed, despite the big political and financial effort by the EU-Administration.

But how to make the Bosnian state function? Reconstructing Bosnian institutions and power structures would require a strong intervention in the internal affairs of the Bosnian state by the international community including the reallocation of political power (for instance by transferring competencies from the Sarajevo shadow government to the authorities of the entities or by dissolving para-state structures). It should thus be understood that peace-building is a profoundly political exercise which may, sometimes, lead to the

¹² International Crisis Group, Elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 13 August 1996.

¹³ Carl Bildt, "The Bosnian Elections, There Will Be No Unified Bosnian State", in: IHT, 15 June 1996, p. 6.

classic peacebuilding dilemma generated by tensions between the need to keep neutrality to secure that all sides gain confidence in the peace-building efforts and the fact that this principle of neutrality is difficult to sustain in the face of outright breakings of the peace agreement¹⁴.

It goes without saying that simply waiting until conditions are right for democratic reconstruction is not a solution. As many authors have emphasized, democratization should not be defined too narrowly as holding elections. It might sometimes be more convenient to provide for legitimacy on an appointive and cooptive basis in the early stages of reconstruction or holding a national covenant, a "large, pluralistic national convention, composed of many political and professional figures and organizations".

Most scholars argue that should national elections still take place, it should be made conditional that a national unity government on a power sharing basis be formed, at least for the first years. New political leaders need to develop experience in working together, and to resolve conflicts on a non-violent basis before they can address policy issues¹⁵. This might include holding "national conferences" all over the country as an institutionalized negotiation forum in which conflicting parties should try to reconcile their diverging interests. "Societies need a state before they can hold electoral contests to decide who will run it, and they need some experience in working together before moving on to the next stage of democratic alternance¹⁶.

3. Democratization and Building Civil Society

By definition, democracy cannot be imposed from above, but must be developed from the bottom up by strengthening the civil society. In Bosnia, the OSCE has become the main agent of developing non-governmental activities and different democratization programmes¹⁷.

However, for historical and socio-economic reasons, in the countries of the former Yugoslavia there is neither a strong societal basis for developing civil society structures nor a powerful non-political force that could provide for economic state integration. As since the late 19th century, the state has always been the main agent of economic development, there is no powerful economic class or social stratum with a strong interest in preserving or creating a larger economic area. The absence of a non-state socio-economic stratum of entrepreneurs of businessmen means that there are no agents who would be able to counterbalance nationalistic and disintegrative tendencies. As the economies in the South-Slavic countries are weak, the elites have few economic interests that could best be guaranteed by a unified state or at least by creating a broad market. There is still a predominance of

¹⁴ Bertram, pp. 394-396

¹⁵ Zartman, Collapsed States

¹⁶ Ibid, p. 271

¹⁷ Zarko Paunovic, The Associative Forms of Civil Society in Serbia, in: Serbia between the Past and the Future, Belgrade 1995, p. 191-196.

political over economic elites who, unfortunately, still believe that they might benefit most from establishing their own small states separated from each other.

Moreover, there is no real political opposition to the ruling elites. In authoritarian systems opposition groups tend to be quite undemocratic themselves and non-governmental organizations are often weak or discouraged. In the countries of the former Yugoslavia, there is a multitude of civil initiatives, groups and associations, such as peace groups, women's associations and human rights initiatives, trade unions and ecological organizations. But most of them are still in their forming stage and/or politically marginalized. Poor working conditions (lack of skills, material, equipment and funds), political problems (pressure and obstruction by the local or governmental authorities, open intimidation) and a lack of public interest and understanding are the main reasons for the limited influence of these NGOs¹⁸. Some of the NGOs did not even evolve beyond formal existence, while others are restricted to local activities. People are, on the contrary, often suspicious of others and block common activities. Some organizations have virtually turned into private organizations of certain personalities.

One should, when talking about re-building civil society, address these deficiencies directly. And to be fair, one should also acknowledge that many of the Western NGOs which are working in the countries of the former Yugoslavia are suffering from the very same syndrome. Consolidation of alternative movements may be a prerequisite for democratization, but it still does not mean automatically creating civil society, as Zarko Paunovic once put it. Instead, promoting civil society would mean encouraging NGOs to address problems of global nature, to establish mutual communication, co-ordination and co-operation, and to form nation-wide networks or coalition of movements and groups with a joint coordination (such as the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly). It would imply, moreover, to train activists and to provide material, technical and financial assistance.

4. Economic Assistance

Economic consolidation is often considered as the main prerequisite of peacebuilding activities. Indeed, there can be no doubt that a quick start to the process of reconstruction is essential to give people in a post-war confidence in the new era. As for Bosnia, there is a strong belief that the country "could reemerge in the future from the ruins of the war devastation to become a rapidly growing successful economy, provided international assistance can be mobilized for the initial reconstruction"¹⁹. More critical

¹⁸ Jasna Malkoc, "Der Aufbau der Civil Society in Bosnien-Herzegovina", in: Marie-Janine Calic (ed.), *Friedenskonsolidierung im ehemaligen Jugoslawien: Sicherheitspolitische und zivile Aufgaben*, Ebehausen 1996, pp. 97-105.

¹⁹"Bosnia and Herzegovina: Economic Issues and Priorities", discussion Paper prepared by the Central Europe Department of the World Bank, September 18, 1995,p.i.

voices, however, emphasize that the set-backs of the first post-war would point in a completely different direction.

Bosnia and Herzegovina was one of the lower income republics of the former Yugoslavia, and the war added enormous damages to the deep economic problems of the small state. Since the beginning of the war in April 1992, about 250,000 war-related deaths have been registered, about 200,000 people have been injured, of which about 75,000 were heavily injured or disabled. More than half of an estimated 1991 population of 4.4 million became refugees or displaced persons.

Economic data is no less concerning. By the end of the war in 1995, average GDP per capita on the entire territory of the Republic was estimated at about US \$500 compared with a per capita income of around US \$1,900 in 1990. In April 1996, industrial output was estimated at about 5 percent of its 1990 level, while the unemployment rate reached at least 90 percent²⁰. However, overall estimate of war-damages vary: the Bosnian government has produced an estimate in the \$50 to \$70 billion range, while the World Bank's estimate is in the \$10 to \$20 billion range²¹.

To strengthen economic activity US \$518 million have been provided by the international donor community for emergency needs. The World Bank and EBRD agreed that in the following years at least US \$5,1 billion will be needed to finance the most urgent reconstruction projects. In December 1995, a first conference of 52 nations and aid agencies started the task of planning the reconstruction of Bosnia. Priorities of reconstruction are housing, accommodation of displaced persons and refugees, employment, creation of jobs, social needs of the most directly threatened categories and restoration of essential infrastructure. Despite the general willingness of the international donor community to support economic reconstruction, many practical problems arose in connection with the distribution of aid. As long as the state institutions have not been created there are no reliable interlocutors on the ground to whom assistance might be provided.

Some researchers claim that in the context of a coherent peacebuilding approach, a new type of aid that goes beyond pure reconstruction is required. Such an approach of longterm "post-conflict transition assistance" should promote economic and social revitalization, including the assessment of damage to economic and social infrastructure, provision of technical assistance for rehabilitation and reconstruction, rehabilitation and reconstruction of infrastructure, reactivation of smallholder agriculture, rehabilitation of export agriculture and key industries, community revitalization, and support of regional economic initiatives²². Post-conflict

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ "Bosnia and Herzegovina: Economic Issues and Priorities", discussion Paper prepared by the Central Europe Department of the World Bank, September 18, 1995.

²² Nicole Ball/Tammy Halevy, *Making Peace Work: The Role of the International Development Community*, Overseas Development Council: Washington, DC 1996 (Policy Essay No. 18).

transition assistance thus requires an integrated and comprehensive approach, and this is exactly what is lacking in the case of Bosnia.

Although the Office of the High Representative has been created in order to assume a coordinating role in the overall civilian implementation of the Dayton Peace Accords there are obvious flaws in the set-up. The international donor community is highly diverse, many government agencies and NGOs are competing with each other rather than cooperating, and there is no strategic vision or clear political idea with most of the aid. The fact that civilian activities fall within the mandates of various institutions, agencies and offices is, at the same time, the main impediment for the establishment of an effective mechanism of political conditionality.

After one year it has been widely acknowledged that economic assistance should not be given unconditionally to the former parties to the conflict. However, no mechanism or detailed step-by-step approach of granting (or denying) economic assistance has been developed yet and local leaders are often not clearly told what they are expected to do. The set of political conditions for economic support as defined by the European Union is vague. For assistance, it includes the respect of the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms; the voluntary return of refugees and displaced persons; creation of conditions for a functioning market economy; disarmament; cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal; and normal political and cultural relations among each other. It has been emphasized again and again that the Bosnian authorities need to make a massive effort in the civil and human-rights field and that the doctrine of self-help and mutual cooperation need to be translated into practice²³.

As for the latter, the underlying assumption is that the countries of the former Yugoslavia, through mutual cooperation, would lay the grounds for new relationship and, in the long run, even for political cooperation. Regional co-operation which is viewed as one means to fill in the political vacuum which might appear after the envisaged withdrawal of the international stabilization forces. However, one should be aware of the manifold difficulties related to regional cooperation in the area. Neither the fields nor the terms of closer cooperation have yet been defined and the variety of historical traditions, political institutions, and economic systems complicate the task of identifying which were shared by all the states concerned. In addition, there is still a complex web of nationalist rivalries, ethnic minority conflicts and border disputes beyond the countries of the former Yugoslavia which hamper the whole process of reconciliation in the Balkans. Historically, there has never been such a thing as "regional solidarity". Last but not least, in many countries regional co-operation is, at best, considered as a first step towards the EU. Scholars and politicians tend to argue that Balkan cooperation should

²³ Pauline Neville-Jones, "Dayton IFOR and alliance Relations in Bosnia", in: *Survival*, winter 1996-97, pp.45-65.

not be an end in itself, but only a means to join Europe as soon as easily as possible²⁴.

To conclude, there can be no doubt that the area will need a long-term international assistance in the economic field as well as in related areas. One should, on the other hand, avoid to allow the supported state (in this case Bosnia) too only rely on external assistance, making itself vulnerable and lethargic. Foreign assistance should be provided only as long as local agents will not take over the task of reconstruction themselves. "External intervention should be available as long as it must, but it should leave as soon as it can"²⁵.

5. Social and Humanitarian Aid

One of the most urgent social issues is the fate of some two million refugees and displayed persons who, under Annex 7 of the Dayton Accords, are guaranteed to return safely to their places of origin. The UNHCR on 8 March presented a plan for repatriation which foresees phases of repatriation and to be completed by 14 December 1997. It goes without saying that relatively few refugees have so far returned home. On the one hand, most parts of Bosnia are completely destroyed so that the accommodation of returning people is, for practical reasons, simply not possible. On the other hand, the remaining houses have often been inhabited by DPs from other regions who can hardly be driven out of their current homes. Most responsibility, however, lies with local politicians in both entities who deliberately prevent refugees from returning to their homes in order to keep control over ethnically homogenous areas. The process of the return of refugees and DPs has so far almost exclusively concerned areas where the ethnic group of the refugees has a majority²⁶. These limited returns have been achieved only with the direct involvement of IFOR. If it does not become possible to resettle the refugees in their places of origin, the process of repatriation will be consolidated with extremely negative effects to the overall implementation of the Dayton Agreement.

More emphasis should, at the same time, be devoted to the mental and psychological consequences of the war and to the promotion of national reconciliation. The guarantee of human rights and the prosecution of war criminals are major prerequisites for this.

Conclusion

The international community has assumed a prominent role as an agent of post-conflict peacebuilding in Bosnia. However, the experiences of the first post-war year show that the Dayton Accords cannot prove more than a

²⁴ Radovan Vukadinovic, Central European Security and Cooperation, Zagreb 1996.

²⁵ Zartman, p. 272

²⁶ Andreas Corti, "The Dayton Peace Process and the Return of Refugees and Displayed Persons", in: Calic (ed), Friedenskonsolidierung, pp. 82-88.

general guide to handling the initial stages of post-conflict reform, so that many concrete issues have not been resolved. To achieve rehabilitation, reconstruction, and reconciliation, it is unrealistic to expect that the international community will have to remain involved for many years.

Military stability is an elementary prerequisite for making peace work. To prevent new conflicts a continuing international peacekeeping presence is required in 1997 and after. The post-IFOR stabilization force (SFOR) should have a similar mandate, composition and structure to its predecessor's. Ideally, it should also engage in completing civilian tasks, such as the return of refugees and the apprehension of war criminals. In addition, a fundamental reform of the security sector in the countries of the former Yugoslavia is required. Assistance should be given to the parties to develop democratic control over their armed forces, to expand the pool of security analysts, and to civilianize the police forces. Civilian-military dialogue and inter-entity cooperation in the security sector should also be encouraged. But also a strong international police force should be made available.

Of course, success or failure of any peacebuilding measures depends largely on the willingness of the parties to the conflict, who must be convinced that their interests are best served by peace and by the process of democratization. However, on the political side, Bosnia is still one of the most bitterly divided societies there has ever been. And yet, the return to normality, reconciliation and recreation of ethnic tolerance should be possible. Unfortunately, there is not much leverage in generating the logic of compromise beyond that of economic aid which, consequently, should be made conditional on the implementation of the key of the peace treaty.

Moreover, the international community should undertake activities which support the development of pluralist democracy in Croatia, Bosnia and Serbia. Concrete projects should be established which might include the protection of human rights, the development of legal, institutional and administrative structures based on the principles of the rule of law and respect for human rights, and to promote attitudes and behavior in civil society in keeping with these values. The latter also includes the development of free and independent media and the conduct of a non-nationalist education policy. This, of course, would require a long-term and constructive "conflict-transformation" approach²⁷. A new and better coordinated type of aid for the transition phase of the peace process would require more financial flexibility, contingency planning, sensitivity to local conditions, and conflict resolution skills. Economic and other civilian activities, therefore, should be streamlined and become more coherent while coordination of the various peacebuilding activities should have high priority. Therefore, the High Representative's authority over civilian implementation should be strengthened. As soon as the peace-building activities succeeded, more responsibility should be given to local institutions.

²⁷ Susan K. Boardman/Sandra V. Horowitz, "Constructive Conflict Management and Social Problems: An Introduction", in: *Journal of Social Issues* 50, 1 (1994), pp. 1-12

Bosnia will continue to need all the attention and support from the international side it can get. It has always been easier to produce national hatred than to restore confidence after a cruel nationalistic war. Much time will be needed to win the hearts and the minds of the Bosnian people for peace.