

INTRODUCTION

INTERNATIONAL CALL FOR ACTION

The Aspen Institute Berlin study group on "The Future of the Balkans" issues the following calls for action on ten topics crucial to establishing peace and stability throughout Southeastern Europe. This declaration is the result of three meetings, which took place respectively in Berlin, Sarajevo and Istanbul in 1997 and 1998.

One and a half years after the International Commission on the Balkans published its report, *Unfinished Peace*, a new team of young experts from Southeastern, Central and Western Europe and the United States has reviewed that work. This report is the result of that review. Herein, our group attempts not only to reiterate key recommendations from *Unfinished Peace* that must not be forgotten, but also to emphasize new points that will: (i) contribute to the building and strengthening of democracy and the rule of law throughout Southeastern Europe, and (ii) facilitate integration into European economic and political structures.

Instead of describing the many problems that remain to be solved, we choose to identify and bring out possible solutions. Our group represents a valuable network, which we offer as a resource for looking further into the proposals that we have developed. In a desire to be brief, we have chosen to avoid making detailed proposals and elaborating on already existing initiatives. We do not attempt to be comprehensive but to highlight a set of specific issues which we think deserve special attention. We hope that interested parties and donors will approach us for contacts to follow through on our ideas.

We are writing to a diverse audience, both governmental and non-governmental, and are assuming in it a certain degree of background knowledge of both the region and the events leading up to the current situation. This report offers recommendations for action on the following topics: security, the private sector and international integration, media, democratic institutions, non-governmental organizations, education, refugees, migrants, minorities and Kosovo.

SECURITY

Experience in the last decade has shown that fragile political institutions and internal instability can generate threats to international peace and security. Southeastern Europe has provided a particularly complex example of this phenomenon. The events in Kosovo in 1998 have underscored once more the complexity of the situation and the need for continuing international engagement in that area. The potential for spillover in critical conflict situations creates the need for decisive action. The pressure of immediate problems should nevertheless not detract from the need to implement measures that will secure long-term stability and security.

While Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)¹ remains a central concern, and in March 1998, Kosovo became an immediate issue, the international community needs to maintain a long-term commitment to improving security in Southeastern Europe as a whole. The key to this is adequate training and education of both civilian and military groups, and the development of security-policy communities. Such communities might include officials, politicians (in government and in parliament), and individuals from various parts of society who have the requisite expertise to engage autonomously in the relevant debates. This will enhance democratic control and accountability, and bolster stability.

It should be noted that much analysis of the Yugoslav crisis emphasizes the importance of economic factors and social dislocation. In the environment so created, political and military leaders have the opportunity to carry out policies through violence. Comprehensive security in the region cannot be achieved without external assistance for economic, political and social development. In this context, the perspective of long-term association with European security structures and processes, in addition to Partnership for Peace (PfP), ought to be encouraged.

In the interest of security throughout Southeastern Europe we recommend to the international community and to political leaders in the region:

1. Institutionalize the Balkan leaders' summit.

The leaders of Southeastern Europe should continue to meet on a regular basis, and the international community should follow up on the results of each meeting and note progress. At their meeting on Crete in November, 1997, the Heads of State and Government of Southeastern Europe reaffirmed their commitment to the United Nations (UN) Charter, the Paris Charter for a new Europe and the Helsinki Final Act. They also restated their commitments to support a variety of existing regional initiatives, including the EU Royaumont Process, the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI), the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), and the Central European Initiative (CEI). The summit communiqué asked the foreign ministers to consult every three months and to establish a joint secretariat to ensure continuity between the meetings. A proposal along these lines should be put to the summit meeting in Turkey in 1998. The summit should reaffirm commitments to the twin principles that individual countries should respect the territorial integrity of other countries, and should not interfere without invitation in the internal affairs of those countries. In reaffirming these commitments, the summit also should recognize the

¹ Please see List of Abbreviations at the end of the document

authority of the UN Security Council to authorize measures supervening these principles when it has identified a threat to international peace and security.

2. A regional Crisis Prevention Network should be established.

Such a network would link university departments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and research, education, training, and media organizations with an interest in security-policy studies. A Southeast European city should be chosen as the coordinating center of this network. Extra-regional assistance programs should be used to support civilian research, education and training institutions and to create them where they do not exist.

3. Existing PfP ties should be developed further through programs of exchange training and exercises. A program of preparation for partnership should be created for those countries that are not yet involved in PfP.

Only three countries in Europe have not joined the PfP program: Croatia, BiH and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), which consists of Serbia and Montenegro. These three countries have peculiar problems arising from their involvement in armed conflict during the 1990s. They, therefore, still have to begin the process of democratizing civil-military relations. The PfP framework may prove to be one appropriate way of moving this process forward. The specific features of BiH can also be addressed in this context.

4. Bilateral and multilateral assistance programs should be institutionalized to strengthen training and education of military personnel and civilian defense officials.

This training should be done primarily in-country in order to educate serving staff officers on issues of civil-military relations and international security. The same training and capacity building is also important for civilians who work in relevant government departments -- defense, foreign and interior ministries and the presidency. Civilians should be educated as future security executives and they should be trained in matters of civil-military relations, defense management, international security and diplomacy. BiH is a special case, and thus the programs there should be implemented both in recognition of existing realities and in the perspective of eventually integrating the separate armed forces.

5. As part of its Common Foreign and Security Policy, the European Union (EU) should initiate and fund a program of assistance to build and strengthen democratic civil-military relations.

The program should be led by a small task force. It should foster the development of democratic security-policy communities and ensure civilian monitoring of defense structures. This would involve both short courses and longer programs focused on security-policy issues. A focus should be capacity building, through the development of autonomous points of expertise on security questions. This should exploit academic, journalistic and NGO potential in these areas. The training of trainers in relevant fields also would be a key element of such programs, as these

people would help spread knowledge and understanding. It should be a priority to implement such a program especially in BiH -- within the communities, entities and the country as a whole.

6. Organized crime ought to be treated as a security concern, and a permanent working group should be established to coordinate efforts to combat these activities.

This kind of group should pay close attention to the issue of corruption and organized crime in the region. It should communicate with InterPol, EuroPol and other relevant bodies that have developed a detailed web of information about criminals and terrorists throughout the world. The establishment of a regional international Police Training Academy (such as in Budapest) is desirable.

7. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) should be encouraged to become more engaged with regard to disputes between Turkey and Greece.

The alliance can act to strengthen the fragile relationship between two of its members. The logic of NATO enlargement has been to embrace countries to promote security and stability. This logic should be applied to existing members. This would be done with a view to developing Greece and Turkey's potential to contribute positively to regional peace and stability.

8. With regard to sensitive border areas, there should be an arrangement to develop transparency, inspection, verification, confidence building and, where possible, demilitarization.

Arrangements of this kind would be relevant, for example, in the case of the Prevlaka peninsula and Boka Kotorska between Croatia and Montenegro in the FRY, and on either side of the Danube between Eastern Slavonia in Croatia and Vojvodina in the FRY.

9. International efforts to secure the apprehension of individuals indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) must be intensified.

This point is vital for developing a sense of justice throughout Southeastern Europe. Without justice in BiH there will be no peace. This is also relevant in pragmatic terms as experience demonstrates that the apprehension of indictees contributes significantly to positive political developments.

10. The ICTY should seek to submit indictments with regard to events in Kosovo after March 1998, both publicly and under seal (as appropriate), and the permanent members of the UN Security Council should give these efforts their full support.

It should be noted that the temporal and geographical jurisdiction of the ICTY permit it to consider the commission of crimes associated with armed conflict in Kosovo. Given this and the correlation between justice and peace, as well as the pragmatic and political benefits which have been seen in the Bosnian case, there is a strong case for the ICTY to embrace the events in Kosovo in the work of the Tribunal. As with BiH, it is appropriate for the Tribunal to play a role

as an enforcement measure of the UN Security Council acting under Chapter VII of the UN Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security.

THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND INTERNATIONAL INTEGRATION

Our group advocates a much stronger overall concentration on economic and trade measures as a tool for building stronger political ties and peace in Europe's southeast. Economic restructuring, the creation of a functioning market economy and improving international economic relations will not solve all the region's problems, but successful economic reform could create an environment where security and political problems could be more effectively addressed. Economic problems, while not separate from political ones, are at times easier to address than deep-seated political or ethnic issues that sometimes are healed only by time.

Economic restructuring is also most successful when the reforms go hand-in-hand with the creation of functioning institutions of democracy, including a vigorous press and an activist civil society. These institutions are the principal guardians against corruption and the unfair distribution of national resources, so often a by-product of the transition from authoritarianism to a free market. Southeastern Europe has been among the last in the former communist Europe to initiate efforts to create an open economic system and to end widespread corruption. It must now urgently turn its efforts to this unavoidable task.

We recommend to the governments of Southeastern Europe and to the international community:

1. Accept and develop an "economy first" approach to restructuring and reform.

Southeastern Europe should learn from the successful economic reforms of other parts of Central and Eastern Europe that the more rapid the reforms, the more rapid the returns on those reforms. Wrangling over approaches to privatization and using political excuses for delaying economic restructuring only make those decisions harder to accomplish later on; the key goal is creating a sense of forward movement and determination. Waiting until all regional political and security problems are solved will only make people poorer, more insecure and less willing to enter into cooperative relations with their neighbors. Quick steps towards economic reform will pay off in quicker overall processes of democratization and international integration.

2. Create a legal framework that respects private property and contracts.

Establishing stronger foundations for a stable private sector would help prevent a return to the politics of conflict and regional tension. Privatization is a major way to ensure that no one group, party or leader ever has the means to dominate the political and economic life of the region. It is also the most efficient way to keep the countries of Southeastern Europe on the path toward economic reform and integration into European and global economic structures.

Privatization in Central and Eastern Europe has demonstrated just how important a new class of private owners can be to successful economic transformation. Private actors--the growing number of owners of small businesses, and individual entrepreneurs pursuing their self-interests--have an interest in a working and stable economic environment that will contribute to political stability, respect for human rights and the rule of law. Central Europe's fast-track states such as the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland provide a storehouse of information on what to do and what to avoid as Southeast European countries proceed with economic reform programs.

3. Institutionalize a system so that membership in the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA) is recognized as the most important stepping stone towards EU membership.

The network of international organizations that have been created as precursors to full European integration is a dynamic and rewarding way to pursue a program of broad-based economic and political reform. All Southeast European countries should aspire to eventual EU membership and should begin immediately preparing for that highly selective club. In the meantime, a handful of complimentary organizations are in place to ease the transition and create the basis for deeper European ties.

The most promising of these transition organizations, CEFTA, should take on a stronger role in Southeastern Europe. While requirements for CEFTA membership should not be relaxed for Southeastern Europe, current CEFTA members should recognize the obvious economic benefits of reaching out to the rich potential of markets and consumers in Southeastern Europe. Such benefits include: the addition of a relatively large new market with many of the same characteristics as Central European markets; a head start on West European competitors who are also looking for new investment opportunities in the region; and incorporation of existing industrial ties into a single economic space. Criteria for CEFTA membership should include both economic and political conditions, which would be designed to lead to full European integration.

As they prepare for CEFTA membership, Southeast European countries should take full part in other regional integration efforts. For example, SECI should be seen as a preliminary opportunity to build confidence, start elementary reforms and train government officials for the needs of an open economy. SECI is also valuable because it strongly emphasizes the capacity of the local levels of government to take cooperative action, and thus avoids questions of conflict between states. CEI, which enjoys strong EU support, is also a worthy venture that seeks to involve the highest political levels in regional integration and cooperation efforts.

4. Develop policies to attract a larger share of foreign direct investment and other non-official funds.

The vast majority of funds available to developing and transition countries is now coming not from official development agencies, but from private investors. The countries of Southeast Europe, which are currently relatively small recipients of such funds, need to make themselves more attractive to outside investors. This includes creating open and transparent laws on privatization, a sound banking system, a functioning stock market and economically sound tax policies. Once such

a financial infrastructure is in place, the area will likely be highly attractive to outside investors simply because of the promising markets that Southeastern Europe has to offer, its highly educated workforce and its central geographical positions between major zones of Europe and Western Asia.

5. Develop and expand the so-called “Corridor Eight” project.

The system that will result from the plan to build an interlinking transport and infrastructure network that will connect Albania, Bulgaria, Macedonia and Turkey will have considerable economic consequences for the whole Southeast. The project, which should include establishing industrial zones along the corridor, should also include links to Greece, Italy, Kosovo, Montenegro, and Serbia, tying together a group of countries that currently suffer from insufficient road networks, ports and other basic infrastructure for a working economic system. Such a project also will aid in the eventual completion of tying Southeastern Europe into the North European economic infrastructure.

6. Link official development assistance to private sector partners and help support the role of local private businesses.

The current Italian policy, which links development assistance in the region to the participation of private partners, is a model that could help stimulate the development of a more pluralistic economic system. While local governments need to develop their capacities to manage economic development projects, official development assistance organizations also should expand their portfolios with local private investors. Such practices not only help avoid the sometimes corrupt awarding of contracts practiced by some governments, but can help stimulate the development of regional projects and attract cross-border investors who help build support for international trade and neighborly relations.

7. Develop a regional information exchange system to highlight privatization plans and other investment opportunities in the region.

Lack of information about economic projects and planned privatization is a problem for both local and international investors. While chambers of commerce and other business associations are active in some countries, they are doing a poor job of promoting local business and investment opportunities across borders in the region. International aid organizations and the international chambers of commerce could help create a cooperative mechanism until it becomes self-perpetuating.

International cooperation among regional chambers of commerce also could be a way to stage meetings and conferences that bring together businessmen in Southeastern Europe. Such meetings could be modeled on the successful experiments with this approach between Turkey and Greece, where meetings of businessmen helped ease political tensions between the two countries and stimulated a number of new private sector investment projects.

We recommend to private sector players and governments in Southeastern Europe:

8. Support the development of strong non-governmental institutions and other organs of civil society through legal and fiscal policies.

Along with a well-functioning legal and administrative framework, non-governmental organizations can be important players in building social consensus around the need for a market economy. They work with citizens, press to guard against corruption, and provide important information about the kinds of economic and political policies that are most likely to be successful. Economic reform programs should include measures to make donations to such organizations tax deductible, thus ensuring a link between the private sector and the non-governmental organizations that are such stable and vital players in prosperous areas of the world.

MEDIA

Media development is one of the essential ingredients in any democratization strategy, since the media often have the power to make or break the success of a country's commitment to democratic systems. Supporting this focus on the importance of press freedoms is the work of Mary Robinson, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and of Freimut Duve, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, who have both reaffirmed the rights to free press and freedom of expression as inalienable human rights which must be protected and fostered.

A lack of diversity and freedom of the press is not a problem unique to the former Yugoslavia: control and limitations on freedom of the media play important roles throughout the region, and have had a significant impact on the recent events between Greece and Turkey, as well as the position of the Hungarian minority in Romania and the unrest in Albania. The main challenge for BiH and the rest of the region is how to support and guarantee a free, independent and, most importantly, responsible and accountable media, without relying on the tools of control that the international community retains in BiH as a result of the Dayton Peace Agreement. Countries like Bulgaria, Romania and Slovenia have made significant progress over the past five to ten years in reforming and freeing their media outlets; other countries, such as Albania, BiH, Croatia, and FRY, have lagged significantly behind, which has been glaringly obvious during election campaigns and in the treatment of ethnic minorities. It is no coincidence that it is in those four latter countries – in which the government still obstructs the development of a free and unfettered media – that conflict has been most common.

We propose to the international community:

1. Aid and financial assistance to countries should be increasingly linked to their respect for and protection of freedom of the press.

A growing number of international financial institutions are recognizing the importance of a vigorous and free press in countries that receive aid. Newspapers and broadcast media not only perform a key role in helping societies understand how international aid funds are being used, but also act as guardians against corruption and waste. Societies with greater freedoms also have proved more adept at using international assistance more efficiently, and utilizing the money for projects that most benefit society.

2. Assistance to the media should focus on nurturing and utilizing local resources and personnel.

International efforts to help the press should concentrate on developing local talent and resources. The economic and administrative freedom and independence of the media should be the primary focus of assistance throughout the region. Without this foundation, there is little of substance that can be accomplished to shore up the media and strengthen it as an independent pillar of society. The international community should pinpoint media in different countries which show the kind of independent role the media can play for the region – such as *Nasa Borba* and *Radio B92* in FRY, the *Feral Tribune* in Croatia, and *Svijet* in BiH. Effective and responsible media sources should be encouraged and given extra help to survive and grow.

International media resources also should be made available for emergency situations. When Radio B92 was taken off the air during the street demonstrations in Belgrade in 1996, for example, Voice of America stepped in with an offer to rebroadcast their program. In this instance, for the first time, Radio B92 was heard throughout the region, instead of just in Belgrade. One example of what not to do is exemplified by the Open Broadcast Network (OBN) project in BiH. This undertaking of the international community -- under the supervision of the Office of the High Representative (OHR) -- has been widely considered a failure, and the international sources funding it should withdraw their support as the Soros Foundation has. The amount of money invested in creating this new station has been enormous; the results, abysmal. The station is still not completely off the ground, and the turnover of local staff involved in the project has been high. It proves that you cannot graft outside models onto a local program without any adaptation and expect success.

3. In order to guard against violations of media freedoms, the Council of Europe should reassert itself by threatening suspension to unruly members and implementing an efficient monitoring network in new member states.

Opposition to the acceptance of Croatia into the Council of Europe specifically cited President Tudjman's refusal to respect freedom of expression and freedom of the press -- yet in a political decision, Croatia was admitted anyway. This has fundamentally weakened the credibility of the Council of Europe as a fair and apolitical advocate of human rights in Europe.

More generally, throughout Southeastern Europe independent media outlets are under constant siege by governments -- either directly through strong-arm tactics or indirectly through the use of a compliant court system and tools such as anti-defamation legislation, which tries to frighten the media into complacency by threatening massive law suits.

Now it is time for the Council of Europe to reassert itself. Serious talk of expulsion or suspension from the Council of Europe has proved a credible threat. Therefore, if member states fail to respect human rights, they should be suspended. Furthermore, the Council of Europe must establish an effective permanent monitoring system to observe freedom of the press in member countries as well as in prospective or applicant members.

4. The International Federation of Journalists and other relevant organizations should work with journalists in Southeast European countries to create a regional press network and local journalist associations.

The region's journalists should recognize that the best defense against state censorship and the greatest guard of their professionalism is to associate with each other. For example, they could create national press associations as well as a regional journalism forum for regional journalists to meet and make contacts. Such associations can impose standards of professional conduct on members and prevent the perception of the need for government intervention to instill professionalism and discipline -- the general precursor of (or excuse for) government censorship of

the press. A regional forum would be ideal for fostering contacts among regional journalists and for implementing journalist exchange programs.

The German Press Council, which is a professional organization overseeing the media in Germany, is one model for a national press association that could be utilized. The International Federation of Journalists and other similar organizations could assist in the founding of such organs by providing advice on how to form associations, and by locating initial funding.

5. The Council of Europe, the European Commission and Western governments should promote and carry out an information campaign in the region.

In particular, as is called for in *Unfinished Peace*, the texts of major documents regarding press and media freedoms should be translated into local languages and widely distributed. Conferences, lectures and seminars, when coordinated and properly targeted, are enormously beneficial and should be increased. NGOs such as the International Federation of Journalists and bodies such as the European Commission have done an excellent job in organizing conferences and attracting a wide variety of journalists from throughout Southeastern Europe. However, more must be done, and these organizations must make sure that they are constantly updating their invitation lists and expanding the participant base to include not only journalists from urban areas, but also from the provinces.

6. Increase the training of new journalists and exposure to colleagues from abroad.

Training and exposure enhance the desired professionalism needed in this field. Many of the problems of the media in Southeastern Europe today are the result of poor education and lack of training rather than sheer malice. The World Bank, Soros Foundations, BBC, and several other organizations run training programs, but these need to be expanded, and certainly deserve more support from government aid agencies.

In addition, international organizations which train, or fund training, should pay more attention to training in methods of conflict prevention and conflict resolution. There exist experienced and professional conflict resolution specialists throughout Southeastern Europe today, and there have been significant results from their work, particularly related to the elimination of "inflammatory" terminology on the airwaves in parts of BiH. Organizations such as the US-based Search for Common Ground and the European Common Ground programs have made strides towards training talk-radio journalists in methods of resolving conflict and using the radio as a tool for reconciliation and problem-solving rather than as a tool for spreading conflict. These and similar programs, which face constant funding problems, should be supported and expanded.

7. Remove visa barriers for professionals to travel and attend training and seminars.

Professionals from the region should be able to travel relatively freely within Europe and the US in order to gain (or hone) their professional skills -- and one step to take would be for governments to make it easier for such professionals to visit their countries.

DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

Civil society and democratic governance consist of a comprehensive range of organizations, practices, experiences and attitudes. While the important role of non-governmental organizations is generally emphasized in the democratization process, efficient and professional state institutions are equally vital to democratic society at large. Institutions integral to democratic processes include schools, universities, trade unions, lobbying and pressure groups, the judiciary, local and national administrations, parliament and political parties.

Democracy can only exist if the individuals who participate in it simultaneously demand that the constitutional framework is respected by the authorities, and also actively engage in strengthening democratic institutions. This engagement must begin at the grassroots level – in schools, the workplace and the neighborhood. Currently, the behavior of citizens in Southeastern Europe resembles a paradox; they expect an array of services from their governments, but their own feelings of individual responsibility towards the state and their communities remain underdeveloped. A further harsh reality in the transforming societies of Southeastern Europe is that one of the main obstacles to democracy remains corruption and societies' tacit acceptance of the tainted networks in place. In such a system, the rule of law will only be achieved if the people see direct personal advantages in it.

With this in mind, we recommend to the international community and to the local governments:

1. The international community should establish a special fund to assist joint projects of Southeast European political institutions and organizations.

Joint projects throughout Southeastern Europe that work with institutions such as parliaments, political parties, media and trade unions would help stimulate cooperation among regional political organizations and institutions. *Unfinished Peace* observes that "mutual distrust between most countries of the region can hardly be overestimated." Professions can serve as initial frameworks for this much needed cooperation. Regular meetings of, for example, members of parliament (MPs) or political party figures, can help to develop supranational perspectives on political conflicts in the region. Similar programs among western countries should be replicated on a regional level.

2. The EU, Council of Europe and other international bodies should increase their assistance and training programs to offer Southeast European governments support in administrative and legal reform.

The assistance programs should aim at creating an open government with a transparent administration. In addition, international organizations should make this aid to governments conditional on clearly defined aims in administrative and legal reform. For example, before providing financial assistance, international institutions should develop an implementation time plan and freeze assets unless the respective governments take the necessary steps towards reform in defined sectors. Such programs will considerably reduce the impact of corruption in these

countries. To complement these, specific anti-corruption programs should be put in place and staffed by independent members of local civil society. Other programs should focus on creating an independent judiciary and a non-politicized police force.

3. Southeast European governments should set up a permanent “clearing house” to exchange experiences and expertise regarding legal and administrative reform aimed at creating transparency, fighting corruption and organized crime, and strengthening accountability in the civil service.

Governments should be encouraged to exchange their experiences in the transition process and share best practices. The clearing house should include an archive and basic documents that detail working practices found in other parts of the world. The transparent nature of this institution, based on the sharing of information and approaches, would help increase confidence among the respective governments and reduce tensions and mutual suspicions.

4. Increase training and exchange programs for students in the fields of administration, economics, judiciary, political science, media and related fields in order to create a new generation of democratically minded leaders.

The establishment of a responsible political elite remains a vital issue for the development of new democracies. In Albania and Serbia, for example, it was not democracy that failed, but the political classes in power, and to a certain degree those in the opposition, all of whom proved incapable of leading the democratic processes. Recent developments in Southeastern Europe make the preparation of a new political order a necessity. This is a long-term process and there is a need to invest more in the younger generation. The prevailing political culture in Southeastern Europe of the exclusion of the "other" eventually must be replaced by a culture of inclusion, in conjunction with the establishment of new political classes.

5. Western trade unions should form close alliances with appropriate trade union partners in Southeast European countries, offering expert advice and facilitating an exchange of experiences.

In Southeastern Europe, the weakness of social institutions is the major source of political instability and lends to an overall disrespect for democratic procedures. Four socio-political institutions deserve particular attention: parliaments, political parties, media and unions. Of these four, unions remain the weakest, and enhancing their role on the political scene in these countries is crucial. Certain groups in Southeastern Europe retain an uncritical faith in the free market as a universal cure for all social ills – a belief that market forces must not be limited by social restrictions. According to this philosophy, strong unions represent obstacles to economic growth. But a better organized labor sector could help countries reach the broad consensus necessary to implementing sustainable economic and social reforms. Another hindrance to the development of unions is the fact that in Southeastern Europe, talented and energetic individuals rarely choose careers in unions; business, media and politics are perceived as much more attractive professions.

6. The role of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in providing technical assistance to, and monitoring of, democratic institutions should be strengthened and maintained, even in countries that appear to have reached a relatively good level of stability.

Organization of free and democratic elections according to Western standards represents the most critical test that all the new democracies in this region will have to pass by the end of the century. Recent experience shows that the OSCE's role in observing electoral processes is vital, and will remain so well into the future. The impartiality of EU institutions and observers in election campaigns remains a pre-condition for international and societal acceptance of the results of elections which are declared "free and fair."

7. The OSCE should extend its activities to actively support the building of democratic institutions, thereby underlining its continuing commitment to democratization outside the election process.

The experience of the OSCE in supporting the development of democratic institutions, civil society and confidence building (such as current programs in Albania and BiH) should be used to initiate much needed programs in other Southeast European countries. Programs should be designed according to a country's needs, in close cooperation with local institutions and NGOs. The international community should support and strengthen OSCE involvement in these countries.

8. A multinational research institute should be created to explore the evolution of democratic institutions and their troubled history specifically in Southeastern Europe.

Understanding why Southeast European countries have failed to recognize liberal values as their own vital interests should be the subject of serious research and analysis. The discrepancy between the declared devotion of these countries to the values and development of democratic institutions, and the practical reality in the functioning of these institutions needs to be exposed.

Due to the working realities of democracy in Southeastern Europe, parliaments, political parties and media are often unable to play constructive roles, and thus lose the respect of society. Even worse, the failure of liberal reform is resulting in increased attention to nationalist politicians, who often successfully stir popular demands for territorial expansion in the name of national unification. Sadly, these demands are being instigated and inspired by the political, as well as intellectual, elite. Such campaigns, which rely on historical myths and delusions, can be initiated in any Southeast European state and only lead to repeated wars and conflicts.

This institute should in particular look at explaining the regional obsession with state borders that continues to plague societies in the contemporary space of Southeastern Europe. The institute should use a multidisciplinary approach, encompassing sociology, history, political science and economics.

9. Supporting women's participation and leadership should be made a priority in a variety of areas.

Governments should apply the Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and should create the necessary institutional framework to enforce it, including establishing ministries for women and gender equality. Parliaments should appoint ombudswomen to supervise the implementation of CEDAW. They should have the power to act on particular discrimination cases.

NGOs that work on advocacy of women's rights, on increasing awareness of family violence, or that provide shelter for battered women and children, should be supported by governments and international institutions.

In particular, NGOs and international institutions should make greater efforts to involve women in their programs. It is crucial to work at the community level on women's empowerment by spreading overall awareness of equal rights and encouraging women's economic independence. Micro-credit programs and grants to women running small and medium size businesses would support this goal.

CIVIL SOCIETY, NGO AND GRASSROOTS MOVEMENTS

In most Southeast European countries, civil society organizations have played a crucial role in generating mutual understanding and bolstering confidence-building efforts. In a politically difficult environment they often have been the only organizations addressing common interests of citizens across division lines. Nevertheless, most of these crucial players in the democratic process have yet to develop into sustainable organizations. Complicating this development, the process of survival forces them to confront existing or perceived traditions of authoritarian structures. Many people remain unaware of the complexities that these members of civil society face, as they learn to overcome a dominant culture of obedience that can be found not only in their local governments, but in the international community as well.

Citizens can only be empowered to act on behalf of their communities if they are encouraged to actively participate and contribute with their own experiences. The citizenry should be enabled to prepare and implement their own concepts, which must be based on the social, cultural and historical context of their home environment. All initiatives of support and help from the international community should respect this type of approach and should keep in mind the historically imposed psychological challenges to effective expression. Based on this reality, the international community must retain the role of facilitator and strengthener of civil society, which entails adopting long-term sustainable concepts of support.

In the interest of democracy, we recommend to national governments:

1. Remove legislative, judicial and other obstacles to local NGO work and end harassment of NGO representatives.

Some governments have erected nearly insurmountable barriers to the effective functioning of non-governmental organizations. Barriers include legal obstacles, spurious fiscal investigations and other fabricated impediments. Governments should recognize the importance of NGOs to the proper functioning of democracy and pass necessary legislation aimed at strengthening and facilitating their work. One of the key measures needed is the passing of tax laws that allow donations to NGOs to be tax-deductible, and which subsequently allow NGOs to raise funds from the private sector.

We recommend to citizens and local organizations:

2. Confront and question governmental policies when human rights are violated. Effective peaceful expression of disapproval can include public demonstrations and civil disobedience, and will ultimately help create an atmosphere in which opinions can be voiced openly.

When human rights are threatened or when “hate speech” is used against a particular group, local organizations should consider actions that draw attention to the damage caused by such behavior. Citizens must be aware of their right to say “no,” to challenge official positions, and to contribute to societal change. Civil disobedience can at times be an important tool. Open opposition by citizens' groups is a corollary to democracy and crucially contributes by suggesting new attitudes

and introducing new proposals. Creating a space in which people can openly express opinions, feel comfortable responding to one another and act on behalf of their communities is of utmost importance in the search for solutions to the burning problems of the Southeast European countries.

3. Promote and facilitate local and regional dialogue, confidence building and advocacy of democratic values.

Confidence-building measures within and among different ethnic groups is crucial to progress towards stability and democracy in most areas of Southeastern Europe. Dialogue among groups of different ethnic backgrounds should be encouraged, and should include discussions about their different identities and histories. In post-conflict areas, questions of individual guilt and responsibility need to be addressed in public debates and constructively presented by the media, especially in small communities. Advocacy of values such as tolerance, non-violence, solidarity and co-operation is essential in the process of assisting societies in the transition process from a one-party state to democracy and pluralism.

Examples of much needed work include:

- confidence building at the community level; the promotion of community building and volunteerism, to help local people meet their needs; and support for physical reconstruction of war-torn areas, which also addresses social reconstruction, and helps initiate communication or cooperative projects in areas such as agriculture and business;
- fostering intercultural education programs and basic nonviolent communication skills as part of regular education curricula or as occasional workshops and seminars;
- producing media programs that address different cultures, histories and identities, and address individual responsibility for current and past events.

4. Contribute to the development of respect for human rights by lobbying political parties and governments to apply international human rights standards.

To build a human rights culture, a number of key steps are necessary. Local NGOs -- in addition to the already excellent proactive network of Helsinki Citizens Assemblies -- should get actively involved in human rights-monitoring investigations and intervention. Local NGOs should also pressure their respective governments to ratify and implement internationally recognized human rights standards and to amend domestic court and administration procedures. Increased government cooperation with international human rights organizations is essential. Finally, human rights institutions such as ombudsmen offices and human rights chambers should be established throughout the region.

5. Establish independent institutions to conduct research, propose new policies and carry out civic education and training.

Working democratic societies require that such independent institutions exist and cooperate closely with local NGOs to provide evaluation and reliable background analysis regarding the needs of society. This collaboration should focus on the development of realistic and feasible

political, economic and social concepts. Centers for peace and women's studies, for example, should be set up with the aim of providing peace-building concepts and encourage exchange between theoretical and practical practitioners. Key subjects that might be addressed by such centers include peace education, conflict transformation, citizens' participation, women's rights and social justice. Agencies for organizational development may help NGOs establish participatory structures for decision making and planning processes and non-authoritarian leadership methods.

6. Create and support education programs, and promote civic education in all public institutions.

Programs that emphasize participatory elements, along with education promoting self-respect, dignity and tolerance, should be encouraged in all public institutions. Local NGOs should advance the idea of civic-education governmental and non-governmental institutions.

We recommend to international and local organizations:

7. Facilitate sustainable NGO development.

A crucial shift is needed to make local NGOs and civic groups self-sustaining. A long-term concept needs to be set up for "train the trainers" programs aimed at citizens empowerment, peace building, organizational development, gender awareness and nondiscrimination awareness. Possible support might include financial contributions, the establishment of foundations and endowments and the creation of opportunities to exchange expertise. Ad hoc and temporary programs should be replaced with those that plan for ten years or more. Similar approaches should be developed on a regional level to strengthen cross-border cooperation in the full range of NGO activities.

EDUCATION

Education plays a crucial role in the development of active civil and political institutions which encourage and permit people to effectively communicate on fundamental questions arising from human coexistence. The type of education available determines whether people will demand free and pluralist media sources to facilitate open dialogue and the exchange of opinions, or, due to biased information, resort to “hate speech” that helps exclude whatever does not conform to their political and national culture.

Education plays a fundamental role in developing human capacity to appreciate diversity and to be able to coexist in the same space with people of other national, ethnic, linguistic, religious and minority backgrounds. For this reason, in the necessary revision of educational curricula, sufficient space should be given to minorities; this will help to create an informed population, which will be less susceptible to manipulation and propaganda.

We urge the international community to support regional non-governmental and governmental projects that will enhance pluralism and choice in the educational systems of the Southeast European countries.

We therefore recommend the following to the local governments and communities:

1. Decentralization must be initiated in the educational system, based on democratic principles.

This must be done by developing parent-teacher associations and student associations that will participate in decision making over the management of the schools and the writing of the curriculum that is provided in the schools.

We recommend that the international community facilitate and participate in specific programs in cooperation with regional governments or NGOs, as appropriate:

2. Seminars should be organized for all those involved in the educational system, aiming at the prompt adjustment of the content of education.

Both public and private education should enhance a tolerant, multicultural and democratic society, especially focused on the development of sensitivity on issues of human rights and peace cultures. The training curriculum should include issues such as: the role of educational institutions in a democratic society; the functioning of democratic educational institutions; models of co-operation and networking; how to achieve dialogue with decision-makers; and the right to education for returning refugees and displaced persons.

3. Commissions of experts should meet at two levels to develop guidelines that will help communities to evaluate textbooks according to inclusive standards.

First, a bilateral meeting of experts from the West who have worked in producing successfully non-ethnocentric interpretations of history should be convened with experts from the East, in order to exchange and compare experiences; second, a meeting of regional education and history experts from Southeastern Europe should be organized, with the goal of developing common guidelines for schoolbooks, particularly history textbooks. All countries in this region ought to revise their curricula and those textbooks that, as shown in many studies by scholars from all countries, are prepared from a nationalist perspective. Particular and urgent interest should be shown in transforming the patterns of teaching and in improving the contents of schoolbooks.

4. Teams of experts should write alternative history, geography and other textbooks for all countries in the Southeast European region that are not based on ethnocentric interpretations.

Efforts should be made that history textbooks teach the subject from a regional Southeast European, rather than a national perspective. This should not be limited to primary and secondary school textbooks but also should include those used in higher education which, in many cases, are not devoid of ethnocentrism. As some states may be reluctant to move in this direction, international governmental and non-governmental institutions should play a primary role in facilitating and enhancing this process by promoting these initiatives and seeking input from local and regional academics and non-governmental organizations. Such projects should be supported by UNESCO, CIVITAS, the European Commission, the Council of Europe and other international organizations.

5. One or more regional independent universities with model curricula should be established.

They should offer multi-lingual and multicultural programs. Two good examples of institutions of higher education that strive to do this are the Central European University in Budapest and the American University in Bulgaria. Due to their multicultural characteristics, BiH and Macedonia would be ideal target countries for such universities.

6. Primary, secondary and higher education in minority languages should be provided, wherever there is sufficient demand for it.

Well established past traditions of Pristina and Transylvania need be respected and even enhanced. Such institutions always must ensure that their curricula also promote multiculturalism.

REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS

The scope of the exodus of citizens of BiH, caused by the aggressive and ethnic character of the recent war, is without precedent in modern European history. The return process has been stymied, both by political obstructionism and, until recently, an international community lacking a conceptual framework for organizing returns. Now, there are some positive indications of progress, and the international community (in particular OHR) needs to build on these developments to ensure that all who so desire, may return to their pre-war municipalities. Not to be ignored in the region is a growing concern about a refugee crisis as a result of the outbreak of armed conflict in Kosovo. A flow has begun and threatens to create a massive refugee wave, which could destabilize Albania and Macedonia.

We recommend to the international community and national governments:

1. Refugee rights must be guaranteed.

These rights include: the right of everyone to choose where he/she wants to live; the right to return home if so desired and the right to compensation if not; and the right to equal access to employment and housing opportunities wherever one chooses to live. These rights are often denied not only in the countries of Southeastern Europe, but also by other European countries hosting those who have fled the region.

Of special concern regarding refugee rights in the region:

a) In BiH, authorities of all sides have failed to uphold their commitments under the Dayton Peace Agreement to allow refugees and displaced persons (DPs) to return to their pre-war homes if they so choose. The authorities in the Republika Srpska have consistently obstructed the return of Bosniaks and Croats. The Bosniaks have been cited for their discriminatory policies in Sarajevo regarding Serbs who left Sarajevo after cessation of fighting. And the Croats in BiH have continuously obstructed Bosniak and Serb returns to areas controlled by their forces, as well as encouraged Croats in central BiH to resettle in Croat-controlled areas adjacent to Croatia.

b) Thousands of Serbs have fled Eastern Slavonia since January 1998 when the territory was turned over to Croatian control by the UN. The government of Croatia also has done little to encourage the Serbs, who fled Croatia during the war, to return to their homes. Many of these Serbs are residing in temporary housing in the Republika Srpska and FRY, lacking information regarding return prospects, yet denied full citizenship rights where they currently reside.

c) The majority of refugees in FRY, both from BiH and Croatia, are living in refugee camps where they lack food, water, heating, medicine, etc. Humanitarian assistance is lacking, and the government of FRY is either unwilling or unable to provide these people with the basic conditions for survival. Furthermore, the government of FRY has forced some Croatian Serb refugees to resettle in Kosovo by threatening to challenge their refugee status.

2. Programs for facilitating the return of refugees and DPs must be implemented.

An excellent example of such an existing program is the “open cities” program in BiH, which should be broadly supported. This initiative differs from others in BiH so far because it rewards towns which fulfill conditions of the Dayton Agreement (especially regarding the return of refugees), and channels economic aid and support not to the returnees but to the municipalities for equitable distribution. Thus, resistance to refugee returns has been reduced because the whole community has benefited from returnees. This program needs to be continued, expanded, and strengthened to include more municipalities in BiH.

In addition, there is a need for information projects (including projects in cooperation with refugee host-countries) to disseminate accurate information regarding the situation on the ground. Despite major efforts by some NGOs to work with the Bosnian media to develop programming for television and radio which provides accurate information regarding the situation on the ground in BiH, there is still a dearth of information regarding living conditions, prospects for employment, the health and education situations in towns, etc. To remedy this, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) should launch an aggressive information campaign, both through the media and through the opening of information offices in areas with refugee and DP populations.

3. International and local governments should support the Coalition for Return, an effort organized by OHR bringing together DPs and refugees regardless of national background.

The Coalition was founded soon after the Dayton Peace Agreement and is a unique, albeit weak, grassroots movement that extends across BiH, even encompassing refugees from Croatia and Serbia. By uniting communities on issues rather than nationality, it helps to empower the displaced to put pressure on their respective leaders to allow them to return home. It also can play a role in helping mend the social fabric destroyed by the war. OHR and the OSCE in BiH must continue to support this movement, and encourage it to maintain a preeminent activist role in the implementation of the peace process.

4. Coordinate efforts in the Republika Srpska and in the Federation regarding actions aimed at encouraging refugee returns.

It is a good idea to organize a conference on the return of refugees in Sarajevo, but a bad idea not to organize similar conferences in Banja Luka or Mostar. The main argument of those opposing return is always: "Why only here, why only us, what about them?" The coordinated effort of similar action would leave nationalists without this argument, which is deeply rooted even in the minds of those citizens of BiH who are supporting the process of return. NGOs and international organizations which coordinate such events should keep this in mind.

5. Insist upon the removal of all discriminatory legislation obstructing returns.

The international community -- and in BiH, in particular, OHR -- with the political support of the United States and the EU, must insist on the removal or amendment of all property legislation and

refugee status and citizenship laws which result in discrimination against refugees and/or impede their ability to return. It also must insist on the revision of all employment hiring and promotion practices which discriminate against one group in favor of the other – particularly those that prevent returning refugees from obtaining employment.

Furthermore, in BiH, OHR must insist on the lifting of military service legislation for returning refugees, possibly for a period of five or ten years. It is unrealistic to expect any young people – in particular young men – to return to their pre-war homes in the other entity if that means enlisting in and serving in the military of the side opposite to that which they served in during the war.

6. Countries currently hosting refugees, guest workers, or other citizens from third countries (European and non-European) should refrain from forcibly repatriating these refugees if the conditions in their home countries are such that the repatriated refugees' security will be jeopardized.

Under no circumstances should refugees be forced to return to their home countries if their lives will be endangered upon return. In recent months there have been movements in several European countries to forcibly repatriate Kosovo Albanians and Bosnians, regardless of the prospects faced by these people upon their return. Until there are appropriate conditions for return, the refugees should be allowed to stay where they are.

MIGRANTS

Over half a million emigrants from Albania, Bulgaria, Romania, and other Southeast European countries are living and working in Greece and Turkey, most of them illegally. This migration within the region is a new and complex phenomenon.

We recommend to national governments and the international community:

1. National governments and international organizations should work to legalize immigrants, and to guarantee them equal rights and social security.

The recently commenced legalization of immigrants in Greece and the related experiences can serve as a basis for other neighboring countries to begin effectively addressing this growing problem.

2. National governments should cooperate to stop illegal migration and, at the same time, work to sign bilateral migration agreements that ensure the rights of those already there.

A key issue to start with is the guaranteeing of equal access to labor opportunities for all citizens. Also, special attention should be paid to the education of immigrant children.

MINORITY RIGHTS

Full respect of minority rights is a necessary precondition for a democratic society. All states in the region, acknowledging that they are, in varying degrees, multicultural societies, need to elaborate frameworks for the protection of their minorities, as well as implement policies aiming at the blossoming of all cultures.

The following recommendations to governments in the region build on, but also refine and update, the related ones in *Unfinished Peace*:

1. Comprehensive and specific provisions defining the status of minorities should be included in all state constitutions. Moreover, constitutions also should encourage the preservation and further development of minority cultures.

Minority rights should be spelled out in a manner as detailed as possible, and not left in general terms for the interpretation of local officials from the majority national groups. Their mention in constitutions, and not solely in laws, guarantees that they cannot be routinely modified or reversed.

2. Political parties and electoral systems should take into account the need for adequate minority representation.

Constitutions and electoral laws that ban the existence of minority parties are unacceptable. Electoral systems should include some system of proportional representation; if minimum thresholds are introduced, they should not apply to minority parties. All political parties should actively seek adequate presence of minority candidates in eligible positions on their electoral lists. Wide decentralization is also effective by helping minorities administrate areas where they are in a majority and participate effectively in the administration of mixed areas.

3. All states of Southeastern Europe should recognize the right of individuals to define their identities irrespective of the area they live in. People who claim minority status should not have to thereby risk being deprived of their citizenship, randomly prosecuted or persecuted.

Examples of individuals who have been refused the right to define their identity include Macedonians in Greece and in Bulgaria; Bulgarians in Macedonia; Kurds in Turkey; Turks in Greece (recognized only as Muslims); Greeks in Turkey (recognized only as Rum, i.e. Orthodox minority); as well as Greeks and Macedonians outside the pre-determined minority zones in the South of Albania. Ethnic Turks and Macedonians in Greece have lost their citizenship, while, in post-Yugoslav states, members of minorities have been denied citizenship by new states on the territory of which they have lived all or most of their lives.

4. Domestic legislation and domestic constitutions should be adapted to conform to international agreements concerning the protection of minority rights.

Nations around the world are in the process of ratifying a number of relevant documents passed by the UN and the Council of Europe. However insufficient they may be in some cases, they offer an adequate basis for the defense of minority rights. The most comprehensive and legally binding to date is the *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities*, which came into effect on February 1, 1998. From the countries of Southeastern Europe, all but Turkey and the FRY have signed it; unfortunately, as the countries ratify it, numerous potential problems have been emerging. Macedonia officially stated that it will apply the document only to the minorities it recognizes; Bulgaria and Greece also have indicated that they intend to introduce similar limitations upon ratification. Such reservations are inconsistent with the very principles of this document, and we, therefore, call upon these countries to rescind them.

5. State tolerance toward all religious communities, including new religious movements, should be ensured even where there exists an established creed.

All countries of the region have a tendency to give privilege and status to the traditional religion or, in the case of Albania, religions of the ethnic majority, at the expense of all other ones. The latter include religions which are internationally considered "traditional" and which have minority status in some countries (like the various mainstream or borderline Christian and Muslim creeds), but also necessarily include new religious movements that are being introduced in Southeastern Europe, which encompass old Asian religions (like Buddhism, Bahai, etc.) and newly formed religions (like the Unification Church, Scientology, etc.).

6. Civil servants, particularly those working in the field of education and judiciary, should be trained to implement the minority protections of the law.

7. Independent ombudsmen institutions should be established throughout the region.

These institutions should swiftly act, on their own initiative or upon complaints, in cases of apparent violations of rights. Authorities should strongly follow their recommendations.

8. Projects to monitor incitement to ethnic, racial, or religious hatred in the media should be encouraged and expanded.

'Hate speech' has been a major factor in all cases of ethnic tension or conflict in Southeastern Europe. Awareness of this problem and (rather than the introduction of restrictive legislation) a sense of responsibility should be developed among editors, journalists, and politicians. Workshops and seminars to train journalists' sensitivity should be organized in cooperation with major Western media institutions.

9. A non-governmental initiative should be developed to establish a data bank on the historical evolution and the past and present problems of all ethnic, linguistic and religious minorities in the region.

It will build on the existing wide bibliography on the matter which has hitherto lacked consistency and comparability. The information resulting from this initiative should be widely available (for

example, through a web site) and instantly adjustable (which web sites allow). This will put 'minorities' into the picture and will also be a forum for presenting their positions, opinions and grievances. Such a forum will foster debate between minorities and majorities, through workshops and conferences. It will also offer assistance, advice and consultancy in the elaboration of minority policies of national governments.

An experts board should be appointed to review problems and offer solutions. As an NGO initiative, if it acquired the necessary credibility and prestige, this kind of forum could help international governmental institutions such as the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities or UN bodies to carry out their mandate more efficiently.

10. Special projects for Roma minorities in Southeast European countries should be created in order to provide equal opportunities for economic, educational and social development.

The difficult social situation of Roma populations in Bulgaria, Greece, Macedonia, Romania and Yugoslavia is only getting worse as cases of racial discrimination against Roma increase. Due to this and to the growing number of immigrants to Western countries, international financial institutions and the NGO sector should become more involved in supporting job-creation projects, improving conditions in Roma neighborhoods and bringing children back to school. Governments should find mechanisms to support private businesses, that provide job opportunities to Roma population.

KOSOVO

Our group recognizes the resolution of the problem of Kosovo as a keystone to peace and security in Southeastern Europe and we express the gravest concern regarding the development of events in 1998. These violent events have brought the situation in Kosovo to a breaking point, and have exacerbated prevailing political and economic crises in Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. Any delay in confronting the Kosovo issue could lead to a full-scale war, most likely involving neighboring countries: *It is timely and necessary that strong and united international action be undertaken before it is too late.* As the International Helsinki Federation quoted an expert observer in Kosovo: "Concern is not a policy."

In an effort to support those ready to take "action" on the Kosovo issue, our group would like to point out and endorse excellent recommendations that have been made including those in the 1996 *Unfinished Peace* report of the International Commission on the Balkans; in the 1996 report of the Center for Preventive Action called *Toward Comprehensive Peace in Southeast Europe: Conflict Prevention in the South Balkans*; in the November 1997 report of the European Action Council for Peace in the Balkans called "Kosovo: From Crisis to a Permanent Solution"; and in the January 1998 press release of the International Helsinki Federation call "Kosovo: Urgent Appeal for Courage, Leadership and Cooperation." Much work has been done to explore viable approaches to the tense situation in Kosovo, and these recommendations should not be overlooked as governments become involved at the last minute.

Building on recommendations made by the sources already cited, we recommend to the international community:

- 1. Take all the appropriate actions to end violence in Kosovo.***
- 2. Demand the immediate restoration of full civil, political and human rights of the Kosovo Albanians.***
- 3. The Contact Group should appoint a mediator for negotiations between the two parties to facilitate a mutually agreed solution, and the two parties should be obliged to immediately begin working constructively with this person.***

The Contact Group has the authority to do this since it already has an international mandate for the Former Yugoslavia and has been successful in the past. The Contact Group should commit itself to deploy all means at its disposal to resolve this crisis. This process should initiate and actively promote a process designed to lead to a permanent solution of the Kosovo problem. The international community can play a vital role in initiating and facilitating confidence-building measures, a political dialogue, and negotiations; as well as guaranteeing agreements between the parties.

- 4. All appropriate leverage should be used to encourage progress towards a solution and to ensure cooperation of both sides with the appointed mediator.***

Existing tools include the "outer wall of sanctions" and conditionality concerning the development of friendly relations between the EU and its member states with the FRY and its constituent republics. The "outer wall" should remain in place until all conditions for its removal have been fulfilled, including significant progress in the resolution of the Kosovo crisis.

5. International efforts should be geared towards demilitarization.

Eventually, an international commitment, similar to that which was deployed in Eastern Slavonia, should be adopted to secure the cessation of hostilities and to implement the transition.

6. The negotiation process on the future status of Kosovo should have time limitations.

Any agreements reached, including those in the interest of confidence building, should have time deadlines for implementation. One of the problems with implementing the Education Accord has been the lack of any time pressure or obligation.

To Serbian leaders, in order to facilitate a fair dialogue:

- 1. End human rights abuses in Kosovo. This includes state terror, police repression and imprisonment of Albanians for political purposes.***
- 2. Effect a withdrawal of troops and interior ministry personnel to barracks and ensure that they remain there.***
- 3. Normalize the functioning of educational, cultural, information, scientific, economic and financial institutions and implement the Education Accord (signed by Milosevic and Rugova).***
- 4. Enable the reopening of Radio-Television Pristina in Albanian and other media, banned since 1990.***
- 5. Establish local democratic institutions including a local assembly and an independent judiciary with ethnic Albanians included on the bench.***
- 6. Allow the unconditional return of the OSCE long-term mission and opening of an EU/UN office and other international and non-governmental organizations and offices.***
- 7. Express commitment to a dialogue without preconditions.***

To Kosovo leaders, in order to facilitate a fair dialogue:

- 1. Reaffirm a commitment to non-violence.***
- 2. Call on international monitors to investigate all terrorist activity in Kosovo, including activities of the Kosova Liberation Army.***

3. *Make a commitment to the protection of human rights that directly addresses the position of Serbs living in Kosovo.*
4. *Work with the OSCE to assist in monitoring of human rights for Serbs living in Kosovo.*
5. *Express commitment to a dialogue without preconditions.*

Abbreviations

BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
BSEC	Black Sea Economic Cooperation
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
CEFTA	Central European Free Trade Agreement
CEI	Central European Initiative
DP	Displaced Person
EU	European Union
FRY	Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)
ICTY	International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia
MP	Member of Parliament
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OBN	Open Broadcast Network
OHR	Office of the High Representative
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PfP	Partnership for Peace
SECI	Southeast European Cooperative Initiative
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Members of the Aspen Institute Berlin Study Group

"THE FUTURE OF THE BALKANS"

THROUGH A GENEROUS GRANT, THE ROBERT BOSCH FOUNDATION MADE THIS WORKING GROUP AND THE RESULTING DOCUMENT POSSIBLE.

Margarita Assenova, a Bulgarian journalist, has covered ethnic minority and religious issues for Radio Free Europe and Tolerance Newsletter. She has also conducted projects for the "Journalists for Tolerance" Foundation to promote tolerance in Bulgarian society through the media.

Evgenia Atanassova is a journalist on the Bulgarian National TV weekly political current affairs program "Panorama." She works as a reporter, editor and news presenter, covering domestic and foreign events.

Lejla A. Babovic is a lawyer and the editor-in-chief of the Satellite Program of TV Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo. Until 1997 she was working as the head of the international news desk of TV Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 1996, she spent time in the United States specializing in TV management.

Mithat Bereket is a journalist and producer/presenter of the PUSULA (Compass) news program on Turkish television. He is also a columnist in the Turkish daily *Milliyet* and is a specialist on the Balkans and the Middle East. He has been covering all the developments and events in the Balkans since 1990. He is also currently creating special TV documentaries on international issues and has a widely heard, live morning radio news program.

Gábor Bernáth is the director of the Roma Press Center in Budapest, Hungary, where he heads programs to supply news and information to the public about the situation of the Roma/Gypsies and to increase the presence of Roma in all levels of the media. He has worked as a consultant to the Ministry of Culture and Education in Hungary and is a board member of the local Soros Foundation Roma Program.

Srdjan Darmanovic, a former opposition MP in the parliament of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, is an assistant professor for the Faculty of Law for the University of Montenegro, and he is director of the "Center for Democracy and Human Rights" in Podgorica. He is also author of two books and numerous articles and is a columnist for the daily *Nasa Borba* in FR Yugoslavia.

Panayote Elias Dimitras has been, since 1992, the co-founder and spokesperson of the Greek Helsinki Monitor and Minority Rights Group-Greece. In 1998, he also became a Visiting Lecturer at the Institute on Southeastern Europe of the Central European University, and co-director of the Center of Documentation and Information on Minorities in Europe (CEDIME) - Balkans. He has served as a member of, or advisor to, research groups on Balkan problems, human and minority issues, like UNESCO's MOST group, the EU's Euromosaic and Mercator groups, and the International Commission on the Balkans. In addition to his past publications on political science

issues, in recent years he has written several articles and studies on questions of human and minority rights, particularly concerning the Balkan region.

Mara Galaty is the American program director of the Aspen Institute Berlin. She lived and worked in Bulgaria and Turkey from 1991-94 and is currently coordinating programs to improve cooperation and communication at all levels of society throughout Southeastern Europe.

James Gow, Reader in War Studies at Kings College London, is author of *Triumph of the Lack of Will: International Diplomacy and the Yugoslav War* (1997) and *Legitimacy and the Military: the Yugoslav Crisis* (1992). From 1994-1998 he was an expert advisor to and expert witness for the Office of the Prosecutor at International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. In 1997, he was appointed as an expert for Strategic Defence Review to the UK Secretary of State for Defence.

Martina Hauser-Jovecevic is the former head of the Italian Foreign Investment Project for ex-Yugoslavia of the Italian Honorary Consul in Montenegro. She is currently project manager in Podgorica for the Italian Ministry of Foreign Trade regarding Italian cooperation with Montenegro.

Sándor Holbok is the executive director of the "Democracy After Communism Foundation" in Budapest, Hungary, as well as the head of the foreign affairs department of FIDESZ-Hungarian Civic Party. As director of the Foundation, he is the project leader of a PHARE Democracy Program, co-publisher of the quarterly "Jogállam" ("Rule of Law") and publisher of a public policy series on economic transformation. He is developing programs to share information and experiences among countries in transition.

Faruk Kajtaz, editor-in-chief of Youth Radio X in Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina, is a correspondent for several European media outlets. He now is also working as editor for a program that brings news to refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina who are living in Denmark.

Drazen Lalic, is a sociologist living in Split, Croatia. He is now working as a councillor for the Split City Council, and is the director of the Youth Information Center Project. Until 1993 he was coordinator of the research center of the daily "Slobodna Dalmacija". He was also the former manager of the "Puls Agency for Public Opinion Research", and has published four books.

Remzi Lani is the director of the Albanian Media Institute in Tirana. He is a political commentator on Balkan issues for various international journals.

Jasna Malkoc, a German citizen, is working in Sarajevo for the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as the director general of the Democratization Department.

Nenad Mirovic is a sociologist working with the University of Novi Sad in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. His main research interests include national identity, nationalism, and rural sociology. During the 1990s he has been involved in various political activities and causes, such as

the Novi Sad University Protest Committee and the *Novi Sad Center for Anti-War Actions*. He is author of numerous articles.

Andrei Morozov is a senior researcher for Russia's Institute for Strategic Studies in Moscow. He prepared his Ph.D. thesis at Zagreb University and at the Central European University in Budapest. Over the past years, Morozov has published more than 20 articles and commentaries in the Russian media, regarding developments in the former Yugoslavia and particularly the problems of peace implementation in Bosnia and international involvement in Kosovo.

Mark Nelson, an American who lives Paris, runs a World Bank project training journalists in Central and Eastern Europe in economics and business journalism. He is former European diplomatic correspondent for the *Wall Street Journal* and covered the war in Bosnia.

Saso Ordanoski is the editor-in-chief of *Forum*, a new political journal of Macedonia. He has been editor for various Macedonian Media, including Director of Macedonian Television, and he formerly worked as the External Affairs Representative for the World Bank mission in Macedonia. He was also a member (96/97) of the Council for Foreign Affairs of the Macedonian Foreign Minister.

Soli Ozel teaches at Istanbul Bilgi University and is editor of the magazine *Private View*. He is involved in a number of Turkish-Balkan initiatives.

Nafsika Papanikolaitou is a researcher on human and minority rights, working for the Greek Helsinki Monitor and Minority Rights Group-Greece. She has worked on programs of multiculturalism for the Ministry of Immigration of the Province of Quebec in Canada and has been the co-director of the Voice of Greece of the Greek National Radio and Television from 1988-92. She has written a number of articles and has participated in studies concerning issues of human and minority rights.

Senad Pecanin, with over ten years of journalistic experience, is now editor-in-chief of the independent magazine *Dani* in Sarajevo. At the beginning of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina he served as spokesman for the Ministry of the Interior.

Olga Popovic-Obradovic teaches national state and law history as an assistant professor at the Law Faculty of Belgrade University. Her two main research fields involve the national question of the first Yugoslav state and its constitutional framework and the development of democratic institutions in Serbia in the late 19th and 20th centuries. She is currently writing a comparative analysis of common problems Balkan States have had, and are still having, in introducing democratic institutions, especially in regard to the political culture. She is author of a number of articles and two books.

Tamara Radlovic is a project officer for Catholic Relief Services (CRS) in Banja Luka, where she conducts assessments and negotiations with municipal and ministerial officials for the CRS redevelopment programs throughout the Republika Srpska. In 1995 she was a logistics officer for the Commissariat for Refugees, providing logistical support in the movement of 500,000 refugees

from Krajina, Croatia and Bosanska Krajina. From 1992-94 she was a reporter for Channel S, Pale State Television, and covered all aspects of the conflict from all three sides.

Fabian Schmidt, a German, is the Tirana project director of the Institute for Journalism in Transition and until fall 1997 he was a research analyst focusing on Albania, Macedonia and Kosovo with the Open Media Research Institute (OMRI) in Prague.

Blerim Shala is the editor-in-chief of the independent weekly *Zeri* in Pristina, Yugoslavia. He was proclaimed journalist of the year in 1991 in Kosovo. He has contributed to numerous local and international magazines and journals since 1988 and is author of six books.

Laura Silber, an American, is the United Nations correspondent in New York City for the *Financial Times*. She is co-author of the critically acclaimed book *Yugoslavia: Death of a Nation* (1996) and in 1997 served as an advisor to the Office of the High Representative in Sarajevo on planning and policy for implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement. From 1990-97 she was the Balkans correspondent for the *Financial Times*.

Edita Tahiri, the foreign affairs secretary of the Democratic League of Kosova (LDK) since 1994, has also been a member of the Parliament of Kosova since 1992. She is responsible for the LDK's foreign policy activities. In addition she was the founder of the first organization for women in Prizren.

Vesna Terselic, network coordinator of the Antiwar Campaign Croatia, has been involved in the work of civic organizations for the last 13 years, dealing with peace, environment and women's issues. Currently, she works on encouraging communication and peace building in war-torn areas in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. She contributed to developing curricula for the Center for Peace Studies in Zagreb and is now a lecturer there on "Understanding Violence" and "Civil Politics."

Natasa Vuckovic is an attorney-at-law in Belgrade, FR Yugoslavia. She is the program director of the Democratic Center Foundation in Belgrade, which she helped found in 1994. The goals of the Foundation are the development of civil society, spreading of democratic ideas and the development of democratic resources.

Mabel Wisse Smit, from the Netherlands, is the Executive Director of the Open Society Institute-Brussels. She founded in 1993 and directed until 1997 the European Action Council for Peace in the Balkans -- a non-governmental organization composed of a group of distinguished individuals dedicated to establishing peace, democracy and stability in the Balkans.

Luke Zahner, an American citizen, is the Executive Assistant to the Ambassador of the OSCE in BiH. He was formerly the deputy spokesman of the OSCE mission to BiH and also served with the OSCE's Regional Center in Bihac.