

Kosovo – from Dayton to Rambouillet

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A mature, wise, successful and concluding diplomatic action would be recorded if the international community would not have ignored the Yugoslav crisis in its beginning, and if it would conference less for the same matter without finding a solution, but it would hold a single international conference for the serious crisis in Yugoslavia, with serious partners and allies, lead by the USA.

Why did this not happen, at least in Dayton, when such a crisis had already passed four years since its inception? The answer is rather flagellant for the international community, because unfortunately, in relevant circles of political and diplomatic force, the determination and courage for a consolidated and decisive action for a solution was not created yet.

In this conference, a third one in the series (after the ones in the Hague and London) addressing the crisis in former Yugoslavia, determination, courage and bravehood was only on the side of one single international factor, the USA. It had all that, after all failing efforts of the EU in resolving this piece of the crisis, which was now being dealt with by the USA and the Dayton Conference, without having the potential or the pretence to put a halt to the wholesome crisis which had already metastasized throughout the former SFRY area.

The Dayton Conference had delegated the Kosovo problem to the Contact Group, together with other matters disputable with the political order in the former Yugoslavia, until a final settlement of peace. For a long time, it was said that the Kosovo issue would have to be tackled by a future diplomatic cycle.

The Dayton Peace was considered to be the concluding act of the former Yugoslav dissolution and reconstruction crisis. Disputable matters, left to the competency of the Contact Group,

were more related to crisis management, preservation of provisional balances, ensuring mediation and presence of international institutions for the purpose of monitoring. The Contact Group had no power to reach decisions on political and geo-political matters. It would only operate within the framework of the Dayton Peace.¹

The Dayton Conference ruined all hopes of Albanians that something could be done to solve the Kosovo issue, with the same way Kosovo continued to trace, peaceful, subordinating and humiliating. It was ultimately recognized that other paths should be pursued to achieve the everlasting goal of freedom and independence.

If what happened, or better said, if what was necessarily to happen for the future of Kosovo, the Liberation War, led and commanded by the Kosovo Liberation Army, did not happen, Kosovo, Serbia and Montenegro, the whole region, would still be living in the suffocating stink of blood and gunpowder, in the nightmare of war and genocide, which was rising to an unprecedented tragedy. The Liberation War of Kosovo, with its extent, sobered and cleared, provoked and appealed to the international community to act, as it acted, breaking the taboos established by rules of a past time, and by setting a more solid and serious cornerstone of consolidation of a new political and diplomatic system, which would be more active and more fruitful. With a view of creating a different world, a world of emancipation, hope, courage and progress, this war (KLA war, author note) ultimately detached the international community from the illusion that it had been saved from the Balkan with the Dayton Agreement. The Contact Group – was the most concrete body which could be imagined under a shadow “international community” – was in favour of a compromise, a type of a conflict regulation, which was rightfully unfavoured in the Balkan. (the Contact Group, a group of “great powers” – United States, Russia, Germany, Great Britain and France – was created in 1994, with a view of revitalizing the former International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia (ICFY).)²

The EU was rather complex and deeply divided in terms of the Yugoslav crisis. The three most powerful countries, Germany, France and Great Britain, had very different political approaches to the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia. By such approaches, each of the states persisted to use the crisis in ensuring their individual positions inside the EU, starting from political influences and up to the future concepts of European security.³

¹ ALBANIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCE (Centre of Albanian Encyclopedia): Kosovo in an encyclopedic view, Toena, Tirana, 1999, pg. 139.

² Reymond DETREZ: KOSOVO. DE UITGESTELDE OORLOG, translated from Dutch by: Mirela Shuteriqi, Tirana, 2004, pg. 143.

³ Visnja STARESINA: VJEZBE U LABORATORIJU BALLKAN, Neklada Ljevak d.o.o., Zagreb, 2004, pg.49.

Setting from these discrepancies and detractions of policies and interests of greater powers of Europe, and the impossibility of approximating and unifying these extremes, to make Europe a Union in its essence and full meaning of the word, the actions of the USA in resolving the crisis are comprehensible and justifiable. Being the leader and decisive in partial attacks of the Northern Atlantic Alliance, to come to a peace conference by coercion, similar to the Dayton, it was not possible to tackle the whole Yugoslav crisis at one go, in a single conference. In fact, a prior well-studied concept had been missing, because knowing the circumstances and other factors, there would be no one to deal with the matter in terms of coming to a solution. This had another reason, the scepticism of the US in being able to cope with such a large chaos, in terms of tackling the whole Yugoslav problem, which had grown for almost a full century.

Reflections of Dayton on the Kosovo crisis and war

Kosovo, namely the political leadership of Kosovo at that period (1989 – 1997), had been hoping and proclaiming that freedom and independence for Kosovo would be achieved in a peaceful way, through a light civil disobedience, without an active resistance or a liberation war! Such a perspective created some spiritual peace on one side, but an unstable illusion on the other. It suppressed the most sublime and the noblest feeling of sacrifice, thereby postponing any real possibilities of realizing freedom and independence. Examples in the former Yugoslavia were telling us already that such a stance would be illusory, ungrounded and logically unattainable. Numerous wars were witnessed in the territory of former Yugoslavia, in Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, while people in Kosovo, or better said, a single category, specifically political leaders, which carried the views and mentality of the majority of that time, were rocking “comfortably” in lullabies of a peaceful ending to the century-long bleeding wound of Kosovo.

Europe and the world continued to “watch over” the macabre actions in the arenas of war, without moving a finger, while Kosovo Albanians, those illusory, continued to hope that the world would appreciate their peaceful stances!

There were other conferences and talks about the Yugoslav Crisis, starting with the Brioni, Lisbon, The Hague (1991), London and Geneva (1992 -1995), only to come to Dayton (1995). All these conferences and talks about the Yugoslav crisis tackled many other problems in finding a solution, but they did not include Kosovo. The meetings of Brioni and Lisbon almost failed to even mention Kosovo. The Hague pushed it over, with its Arbitration Commission, but not including Kosovo in the level of constitutional units of the Yugoslav Federation, thereby rendering impossible the self-determination rights, which were provided to the six republics of the former SFRY. This Commission, better known as the Badinter Commission, has provided its opinions and suggestions,

which are unfortunately still valid and respectable to the international community, although the Hague Conference is still quoted as a failure!

The London Conference, and its peace process sequel in Geneva (1992 – 1995), condescended Kosovo and Albanians only to a level needed, not to be an integral part of the conference talks. The five Albanian delegations (Albania, as a neighbouring country of Yugoslavia, Kosovo Delegation, delegation from the Presevo Valley, delegation of Macedonia Albanians, and a delegation of Albanians of Montenegro) were another irony and softening of the Albanian issue in the Balkan, serving a masterful persistence of Serbia. Hence, Kosovo only took a place for as much as needed as a source of information for the Conference, which was generously provided, and then it was left to reside along halls and abysses of the Palace where the London conference was being held, only to cover it later as a minority problem of Serbia in the peace process of Geneva.

The same ignorance, or even a worse one, was felt by Kosovo Albanians in the next conference to come, which would be held in Dayton, Ohio, USA, in November 1995. In this case, under Milosevic's persistence and threat of avoiding, or later deserting the conference if Kosovo would be a topic, the agreement was for this matter to not be mentioned at all.

When the Dayton treaties were signed (signatures were given in Paris, and not in the USA), in December 1995, and the issue of Kosovo was left out of the texts of these treaties, Albanians went under a great desperation and anger. Albanians found themselves once more in a position of the most ignored, since the international diplomacy not only did not treat them seriously like Slovenia or Croatia, or softly like they did with Macedonia, not even allowing to dignify them at least to the extent of Bosnia Serbs, who had been able to create a state which was known as "Republika Srpska" from a population scattered all over the Bosnian territory. Albanians were once more treated like in Yalta in 1945, like "petty coins"!

Nevertheless, Albanians, used at length to satisfy themselves with whatever it is given, hypnotised by Western diplomacies, had to swallow these sour pills, and had to believe, or make believe, that this was not negligence, nor infidelity, but a fine diplomacy, like America's very own long-term policies.⁴

This note, although of a belletrist nature, with a touch of sarcasm by journalist Baleta, provides a tragicomic reality of positions held by state leaders and politicians of Albania and Kosovo of that time. The Conference of Dayton and the treaties signed there (Baleta talks about agreements in plural, most probably by considering its separate annexes, author's note), was hurriedly appreciated as positive by Tirana statesmen and political leaders of Prishtina. For illustration, one may only mention a statement by the leader of LDK

⁴ Abdi BALETA: KOSOVA NGA DEJTONI NË RAMBUJE, (Kosovo: From Dayton to Rambouillet) SH. B. KOHA, Tirana, 1999, pg. 242.

(Democratic League of Kosovo), the largest party in Kosovo, and the president of the Republic of Kosovo (self-proclaimed and unrecognized by any international mechanism, apart from Albania) given on the Dayton Agreement to the daily “Rilindja”, in which he stated: “I see the Dayton agreement as a positive agreement. If you think that it is too optimistic, I can only say that I have the right to be optimistic, both as a president and as a man (...). The Dayton Agreement is positive, because it halts the wars in the region, and will undoubtedly begin the resolution of all problems”.⁵

It was very clear that the Dayton conference and the agreements deriving from it, did not end the war in the region, as tempted or stated at times. In contrary, with the ignorance of the Kosovo issue, which was the first act of ruining the myth of the everlasting monist Yugoslav system, a new conflict could be initiated, and it was started, a new conflict in the territory of former Yugoslavia.

The new actors of political elite in Kosovo had promised that the world would reward Albanians with independence and a republic, if they held onto the slogan “peace above all”.

The turn made by Albanians in their political stances of that time had the solution to the Kosovo issue conditioned artificially to two principal events, which had little, if any, direct influence on it: de-ideologisation (freeing from communism) of the Albanian state and democratisation of the Belgrade regime. These two “conditions” would ensure self-determination. Oddly, the fact that Albanians had had their political division not since Anti-Fascist war, namely oppositional political systems, but since 1913, had been forgotten. The strive to tackle the Albanian issue as an ideological differences was one of the most senseless illusions of this stage.

This “nomination” of fictitious events, which at times was even termed a doctrine (Gandhism, a policy of patience), made a good number of actors of the Albanian public life actors equate all paths and possibilities of political regulation of Albanians in the former Yugoslavia in the basket of “human rights and freedoms”, totally oblivious to what was happening to the “basket of unchanging borders”. This was the reason which prevented the Albanian issue from being a “separate issue” in two of the most important editions of international debate on the former Yugoslav crisis, London (1992) and Dayton (1995).⁶

It became a separate issue only when Kosovo Albanians started thinking differently from what they had been thinking that far. They started thinking and acting like all other nations aspiring, engaging and achieving their freedom, with the most sublime and the most valuable sacrifice, liberation war. When Kosovo Albanians decided to get their freedom, not to ask others to

⁵ RILINDJA, daily newspaper at that time, Prishtina, 28 October 1995.

⁶ Shaban SINANI: KOSOVA NË SYRIN E CIKLONIT (Kosovo under the Cyclone Eye), SH. B. „DRITËRO“, Tirana, 1999, pg. 6 – 7.

bring it for them, the others, who had gazed on the events in Kosovo, sometimes in wonder and other times in extreme indifference, begun having a serious interest and a serious engagement, only proportionate to the approach of Albanians themselves to their own unsolved problem.

Albanians in Kosovo and other areas enslaved in former Yugoslavia had not right to be angry, to accuse or to blame others for their lack of engagement for them and their issue, when their own engagement was not even close to what was demanded to gain freedom.

Dayton gave the idea to Kosovars, stated Raymond Detrez in his book “Kosovo, a postponed war”, published in Tirana in 2004. He added further that “the expulsion of around 200.000 Serbs by the Croatian military in Krajina – a military operation which brought the Dayton Agreement – had demonstrated that Serbs could be beaten. The fact that Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina were able to get their own “entity”, the Republika Srpska, with a large degree of independence, made Kosovars demand at least a similar status for Kosovo. The fact that Serbs had gotten Republika Srpska by an armed violence, made Kosovars doubt whether their “peaceful resistance” was the best tactic. What they did not understand immediately from the Dayton Conference was that Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina were compelled by the international community to deal with a compromise, and this should be done by Kosovars as well.⁷

Detrez is rather right when saying “Dayton gave an idea to Kosovars”, because it was made clear that with an armed resistance, one can get even something he never had (like the Serbs in the BH, they won Republika Srpska with a war, but they never had it before), and let alone something which is historically yours, like the case of Kosovo and Albanians, but that would have to be legitimised, with the logic of that time, to gain it properly. Though, Detrez was not right when comparing the compromise Serbs gave in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with a compromise that Kosovo Albanians would have to make for their own freedom. The status of Serbs in BiH bears no resemblance, current or historical, with the status of Albanians in Kosovo.

This issue is also mentioned by Detrez, who adds that “there is a fear of connecting the Kosovo issue with a “final” settlement for Bosnia and Herzegovina. Serbia might demand the separation of Republika Srpska from Bosnia and Herzegovina, and its unification with the Union of Yugoslavia, as “indemnity” for the separation of Kosovo, using the argument that the international community must allow the Serbs in Bosnia what it allows to Albanians in Kosovo. This would be fatal for the Dayton Bosnia, which is already an unsustainable construction (...).⁸

⁷ Raymond DETREZ: KOSOVA, Lufta e shtyrë (Kosovo, a postponed war), original title: KOSOVO. DE UITGESTELDE OORLOG, translated from the Dutch original by Mirela Shuteriqi, Tirana, 2004, pg. 117 – 118.

⁸ Ibid, pg. 158.

Pacifists in Kosovo had set all their hopes on the feeling of justice of the international community – something which is best not done. They were sure that their peaceful resistance would be rewarded, by compelling Serbia to accept the independence of Kosovo in a global solution of the Yugoslav conflict. The indifference of the international community, associated with an ever increasing enslavement by Serbs and impoverishment of economy, took Albanians to a crisis of conscience: it would have been best to take arms when Serbs were in difficulty with Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁹ Maybe Detrez is again right, because Serbia would have been much stringent with three burning heaths of war (Bosnia, Croatia, and eventually Kosovo), and it would be easier to beat it.

It is widely known that politics is an explicit series of preferences and plans drafted to make results of future decisions more predictable and consistent. Pursuit of a consistent policy helps the decision-maker to not do what was done one day before, and not do in the future what was done in the past.¹⁰

Unfortunately, one era had escaped Kosovo, because it was busy doing yesterday's, and the day before that, job, without moving at all, only repeating that "the best solution for Kosovo is independence". Because where more important is the view, the image than the reality, the impression is worth more than the reality, seeming is more than solidarity, being seen is better than being, only vanity sustains. Political profiling is turned into exercise of vanity.¹¹ Nevertheless, there came a time which transformed all these into the contrary, thereby returning to the principal value, sublime acts and conscience onus, in arriving to the zenith of desire, freedom.

There was a common question, made amongst Albanians and wider, but when there was an occasion, also with those related to international politics and diplomacy: Why wasn't Kosovo issue part of the Dayton Conference?

In responding to this question, which at that time stood over the ether of Albanian skies, undeleted and for the ignorant uninformed, in January 1996, Rudolph Perrina, Head of the US Diplomatic Mission in Belgrade, a participant of the Peace Conference for Bosnia and Herzegovina, in a meeting held in closed doors with the Presidency of the Democratic League of Kosovo, and the leader of the subordinating Kosovo peace, Dr. Ibrahim Rugova, would be faced with the question which joined all Albanians of Kosovo: "Why was our issue, the Kosovo issue, not opened in Dayton?" Perrina would be clear and direct. "Dayton had invited those fighting. Dayton is a peace agreement, signed

⁹ Ibid, pg. 118.

¹⁰ Karl DOJÇ: *The Analysis of International relations*, Third edition, translated from the original by Gëzim Arapi, (edition under the auspices and assistance of the American Centre of Culture in Tirana), Publishing House "LIBRI UNIVERSITAR", Tirana, 1994, pg. 37

¹¹ Erhard EPLER: *Die Wiederkehr der Politik*, translated by: Eliana Xhani, ISPS&Rinia 2000, Tirana, 2001, pg. 116.

between parties involved in wars in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina”.¹² Hence, Kosovo would now be very clear on its path, on how would it go around conquering international diplomatic circles to clarify the issue of Kosovo, and to render it solvable. Pacifist circles, even after the direct elaboration made to the issue by Rudolph Perrina, remained in the dark and were even more confused, because their statements had been shattered, and they would be only denigrating to those who had already made the historic decision of engaging into a liberation war for Kosovo.

There are two essential factors that gave a strong push and motivation to the liberation war in Kosovo, lead by the Kosovo Liberation Army.

The first and the most provoking factor was the International Peace Conference on the crisis in former Yugoslavia, held in a military base in Dayton, Ohio, USA. This conference, with its avoidance of the Kosovo issue, showed clearly the path to be taken in reaching that level of international interest and engagement. Another facilitating and stimulating factor for the armed resistance in Kosovo was a decision utterly non-political, totally non-diplomatic and absolutely not pragmatic, to recognize the FRY as a state, only a few months after the conclusion of the Dayton Conference, which ended the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, even though USA did not approve of such a decision, insisting on an “outer wall” of sanctions and non-recognition of the state, until the issue of Kosovo would be resolved.

FRY was recognized without meeting the most elementary of criteria. The key Western democracies had not required to meet any preliminary condition to be recognized as a new international member, apart from the USA. This state creation, had met almost none of the criteria set forth by the European Union in recognizing new countries which had derived or would derive from the fall of Yugoslavia. This gift for the FRY from the European Union, maybe a counterbalance of American actions in the Dayton Conference, was bad news to Kosovo and Kosovars, though an enticing motivation to start what was aimed and planned, the liberation war, to obtain freedom like all other peoples in the former Yugoslavia. The international community, or Europe in this separate case, made an unforgivable and an unjustifiable mistake, by rewarding the promoter and creator of all evil, wars and bloodsheds recorded in the former Yugoslav territories, being aware that the Yugoslav crisis had not been lidded. Kosovo, the initiator of dissolution of this country, which had been termed a prison of peoples’ freedoms, had remained the last pawn to that outworn state creation, while with the most recent decisions, to the new creation which had been legitimised by the international community.

The war was not desired by Kosovars, but was already unavoidable and had no alternative.

¹² Blerim SHALA: VITET E KOSOVËS (1998 – 1999), „ZËRI“, Prishtinë, 2003, pg. 26.

International policies and diplomacy had engaged in great fallacies and irreparable mistakes in the ex-Yugoslav crisis. These bodies include the UN, EU and the USA. The United Nations are closely linked to the three main mistakes of the international policy:

1. A wrongful definition of the crisis, which brought a humanitarian response, and not a political one;
2. Strong opposition to the use of military force;
3. Installation of the so-called “protected areas”, characterised with a lack of determination to render them truly protected. Nevertheless, to be correct with the Secretariat, one must say that the responsibility for these mistakes should be taken by western powers that had the rule in the Security Council.

On the other hand, Europe was facing at least three obstacles to building an efficient policy on the Yugoslav crisis:

1. Failure to clearly understand the true nature of a very serious conflict;
2. Social and cultural hesitation in terms of potential use of military force in powerful countries of the West, which had already gone past a half century of peace, and
3. Institutional difficulties of the European Union, which at that time was going through its establishment stages towards a Common Foreign Security Policy.

All these limitations to an efficient policy deserve a deeper analysis.

As for the USA, until the end of 1994, its policy on ex-Yugoslavia wars had been musing between keeping a distance and direct engagement, without having a clear embrace to any of the options.(...) Washington had its strongest surmise in embarking military infantry. The American military establishment, also stated explicitly, did not want to enter a “new Vietnam”. Despite this, many public American faces, intellectuals and journalists who had opposed the war in Vietnam had energetically joined the fans of military intervention in Bosnia and Herzegovina.¹³

The American engagement with the Dayton Conference changed entirely in the sense of serious and permanent engagement, an engagement without which achievements in calming and resolving the crisis in former Yugoslavia would not be made.

All political circumstances, diplomacy and military conditions of the last decade of the twentieth century, in Yugoslavia and around, and the crisis thereof, did not leave any other alternative for necessary action in Kosovo. Combat was unavoidable and utterly inevitable, even a necessity. It matured to be the only rational action, undesired but reasonable, when Serbian repression and violence had reached the highest degree of irrational action against the

¹³ NEDOVRSANI MIR, Izvestaj Medjunarodne Komisije za Balkan, from the internet, http://mmc.et.tudelft.nl/-sii/b92net/unfinishedpeace/nedovrseni_mir/index.htm (8.03. 2004).

innocent population of Kosovo, and when the lack of interest and indifference of the international community on the unresolved issue of Kosovo reached an insulting degree.

The birth of the Kosovo Liberation Army was a necessity as much as it was a result of political circumstances, both nationally and internationally, of the Kosovo issue.

The occurrence of the KLA was necessary to enable Kosovo to enter the offices of the main governments of the West and the NATO Headquarters, and without such an occurrence, the West could not become an active factor in resolving the issue of Kosovo. The KLA and the events related to it only confirmed a long-known truth: Kosovo is a great problem to the security and stability of the Balkan, and the problem cannot be resolved without the involvement of the West.¹⁴

In short terms, consecutive conferences held for the ex-Yugoslav crisis, The Hague, London and Geneva, and specifically Dayton, had disappointed Albanians to an extreme degree, for their lack of engagement with the hearth of the Yugoslav crisis, Kosovo, which continued to be enslaved under Serbs, without any hope for a peaceful and diplomatic solution. Other alternatives had been long thought in terms of reaching to freedom, but unfortunately, support was strong for the pacifist illusionists. With the conclusion of the Dayton Conference, there was a dawn on the last hope that Kosovo would be able to realize its goals through a peaceful way. Therefore, the Kosovo Liberation Army intensified its guerrilla operations, being enigmatic in the beginning, but gaining in confidence and hope for the people, because something was happening in Kosovo. Not by subordinating to the Serbian rule, but by frontal and courageous resistance, only to transform itself into the only saviour of this population and country, up to the time when this fair and dignified liberation war would be helped by the strongest military alliance of the world, the NATO, towards the attainment of a century long bleeding wound, the expulsion of the Serbian ruler from these areas.

The pacifism of the new political elite in Kosovo, who thought that the Albanian problem would be solved with the fall of ideological differences in a global scale and the democratization of the political order in ex-Yugoslavia, was also incited by external political factors, including institutions of international order keeping. Existence of a dangerous hearth of an interethnic crisis in Bosnia had attracted the whole attention of these institutions, objectively postponing the Albanian issue for another cycle. Meanwhile, the promises were made that sooner or later, in a process of disintegration of the second Yugoslavia, there would be a political solution for Albanians, and in fact, the Dayton Conference had delegated the Kosovo problem to the Contact

¹⁴ Blerim SHALA: "Kosovo Years" (VITET E KOSOVËS) (1998 – 1999), „ZËRI“, Prishtina, 2003, pg. 32.

Group, joining it with secondary issues.(...) European and American policies were that the Albanian issue in Kosovo would be resolved with “recognition of freedoms and rights of citizens”, independently of ethnicity. Actors of the Albanian politics, on both sides of the border, in 1994, had explicitly stated themselves to be “against changing borders”. They had referred, in times, to an idea of a “small cute Albanian state”, “open on both ends”. Meanwhile, in the former Yugoslavia, after the Dayton Peace, the condition of a tense peace was returning, and the pacifist movement was losing its earlier strength. Parliamentary elections of March 22, 1998, were disputed also by domestic factors in Kosovo. Ibrahim Rugova, with the title of an inexistent “parallel rule” had insisted to engage in this campaign, inconsiderate of the fact that almost the half of Kosovo was already involved in a popular liberation movement. By a special decree, he decided to postpone elections for the Drenica area and other parts of the country, which were already at war, but these elections remained partial.

The growth of police and military violence as planned in Belgrade, destruction of all Albanian institutions, the disappointment with the peaceful movement, and the loss of hope that the international community would assign its priority to Kosovo, were all factors which gave the birth to a popular movement of a liberation nature in 1998.¹⁵

The Dayton Conference shed light to a great and naked truth that Albanians had not known or spotted before. The Dayton Conference brought a division, a turning point, a challenge which would have to be faced for a dignified future of this country and this people.

Dayton, a stable solution or postponement

On November 21, 1995, three presidents of new countries which took birth in the dissolution of former Yugoslavia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia (FRY, the remaining part of SFRY, author’s note) and Croatia, Alija Izetbegovic, Slobodan Milosevic and Franjo Tudjman) came out from a military base in Dayton, Ohio, with a signed Peace Agreement, which did not seem to be entirely voluntary, by which they put an end to the three-year long war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, a war which took more than 250.000 human lives.

The stage setting for the “big show” of the Dayton Conference had pursued a wonderful scenario, which was well thought even for psychological effect. Delegations of the three states, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia, were often constrained to dine in huge storage facilities of this military base, loaded with bombing planes, rockets of all types, various types of ammunition in small and large calibre. Slobodan Milosevic had always his soup, and his lunch or dinner close to an earth to earth missile of an American manufacture.

¹⁵ Albanian Academy of Science (Centre of Albanian Encyclopaedia): Kosovo in an encyclopaedic view (KOSOVA në vështrim enciklopedik), TOENA, Tirana, 1999, pg. 131 – 132.

Ten years after the signature of this Agreement, the head facilitator of this Conference, Mr. Richard Holbrooke, ironically stated that “it was wonderful to talk about a peace agreement amidst bombs, missiles, planes and ammunition”.

Muslim Bosnians and Croats created a joint federation composed of ten cantons. Formally, Bosnia and Herzegovina would remain a unified state, with common institutions based in Sarajevo. In fact, this centralized government, even today, has only been formal and less than symbolic.

The Dayton Agreement, which in one hand was an agreement with a good intention of halting the war, had achieved that goal. On the other hand, it created a state with a very complicated and confusing structure, which was not easy to achieve, operate and manage. This structure ultimately consisted of thirteen (13) Governments, one hundred and eighty (180) ministers, seven hundred (700) members of Parliament of these entities, and three presidents. This was a huge load for a country so small, with three and a half million residents, a country devastated and impoverished from war.

Success in Bosnia and Herzegovina is rather modest. The international community only brags about a frequently cited record, that the number of refugees returning is rather satisfactory, although even after return, they continued to live in ghettos and enclaves, without any contact with their former neighbours. The diversity of cultures in Bosnia and Herzegovina had died, or left with the last war. Original birthplaces are inhabited only by those who for a reason or other could not find themselves a position in their own ethnic communities, which happens very rarely.

The basis of the pluralist society is shaky and unstable. To have a comfortable life, one must abandon any project of social reconciliation or regeneration, and therefore, all those with a strong personal conviction or systematic opinions are filled with a permanent anger, if not exploding in an open revolt. Pluralist democracy is only based on a voluntary abandonment of all historical and metaphysical ideas for a new society. It has no ideology.¹⁶

It is very hard to imagine, and let alone implement something in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is rightly put by Chantal Millon-Delsol in her book “Political ideas of the 20th Century”, on pluralist societies.

No future of hope and perspective for this society and state can be aimed or hoped for with stances so different and homogeneous from the two Federation parts, Muslims and Croats on one side, and Serbs in the Republika Srpska on the other side.

The NATO intervention in forcefully imposing peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and to initiate the negotiation process in Dayton, was a rather well-placed action, although delayed. The political, diplomatic and pragmatic peace operation of drafting a written agreement, obviously signed by all three

¹⁶ Chantal MILLON – DELSOL: IDETË POLITIKE NË SHEKULLIN E XX-të, original title: Les idées politiques au Xx^e siècle, translated from the original: Esmeralda Selita, ONUFRI, Tirana, 2000, pg. 284.

leaders of three entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina was also well-placed and necessary to gain time, to think and act in peace and calm, to find better ways and possibilities for a more acceptable solution, which would sustain.

Kosovo had already taken its lessons on what should be done. The Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), a political and military institution, had been established, it had already begun its combating operations, and they started yielding results. It publically presented itself on 28 November 1997.

The military and political activities of the KLA, managed by the General Headquarters and the Political Directorate, allowed the fair fight of the army and the people to be clearly reflected and explained before the international community, only to ensure the realization of a longed dream of the enslaved people of Kosovo, organization of an event solely for Kosovo, an international conference for Kosovo.

It was the Rambouillet Conference which tackled the unresolved problem of Kosovo exclusively. By exhausting all peaceful means in enabling freedom, and by passing another stage of fight for freedom, but now scaling up to a global degree apart from a national concern.

The issue of Kosovo was not a problem only for the Albanians and the region anymore, it was an issue opened to solve in the most powerful, most relevant and most influential circles of political, diplomatic and military nature!

I will not stop at this paper in analysing the Rambouillet Conference, because it has already been addressed and elaborated by many analysts, historians, psychologists, sociologists, military men, philosophers, aesthetics, theologian and others, all over the world. Only in our national coverage, more than 10 books have focused on this topic, in a multi-faceted manner, and have given diverse treatment and interpretations on it.

