

Ethnic Dimension in Kosovo, Security and its Consequences in Transition

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Abstract

Historically, the inter-ethnic conflict in Kosovo has been made for its territory. Both sides, Serbs and Albanians, have voiced allegations of history and ethno-demography to justify their supposedly exclusive right over this ethnically mixed territory. According to the London Conferences (1912-13), Versailles (1919) and Paris (1946) and against the free will of its Albanian population, Kosovo has become part of Yugoslavia. After the Second World War with the establishment of Communist Yugoslavia Kosovo Albanians were given a degree of autonomy within the framework of Serbia. After the dissolution of Yugoslavia in 1991, the Kosovo Albanian population organized a referendum in which independence was elected. On the other hand, Serbian authorities insisted on Kosovo's constitutional status as an integral part of Serbia. Kosovo represents important challenges and also the opportunity to fulfill human rights guarantees and promises of international co-operation. Where ethnic tensions and violence share societies, as is the case with Kosovo, respect for minority rights promotes conditions for political, social, and peace stability. In such societies, different national, ethnic, religious and linguistic groups have the opportunity to live together, communicate effectively and understand the value of differences between themselves and cultural diversity in their societies.

Key words: ethnic groups; political stability; security; peace; nationalism; discrimination; transition;

1. Introduction

The United Nations and other intergovernmental organizations working in Kosovo need to implement more effectively human rights standards and human rights approaches. Different ethnic, religious and linguistic communities in Kosovo must understand that solutions remain in their hands so that solutions are the responsibility of governments and the international community and make intensive efforts to overcome the current divisions. The political will to achieve justice and sustainable solutions must be demonstrated by all civil society, states and international actors. The political will to respect the rights and the appreciation of everyone's contribution is an essential component of functioning, sound and prosperous societies: the willingness to talk, to share, to cooperate, to participate; the will to build bridges and break the barriers between communities, no matter how deep these barriers have become. Without such a will, even the best efforts of the international community would never have been enough (Clive Baldwin, 2007).

There are no easy solutions to the problems in Kosovo; however, there are ways that provide great potential for inclusion, peace, stability and development. These paths should deny segregation and ethnic cleansing by including the rule of law and minority rights. The alternative is a continuous, unreliable and unseasured future that has a potential not only to bring once again suffering and conflict to the lives of peoples in Kosovo, but also to provoke the tensions in a region which has suffered many of the destructive consequences of nationalism and discrimination.

In 1999, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) fought for the rights of a Kosovo Albanian minority within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY). Since June 1999, Kosovo has been governed by an interim administration led by the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), including the European Union (EU) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). A "security presence", called KFOR (Kosovo Forces), is led by NATO and includes soldiers from at least 30 member states and non-NATO members. Thousands of international officials have worked in Kosovo, and millions of euros have been spent in Kosovo. The international protectorate arises in circumstances in which it

was clear that its most important priority would be to ensure harmony and cooperation between different ethnic groups, namely the assurance of full protection of all the rights of these groups, particularly the minorities. From this point of view, it would have seemed to us that Kosovo should have been blessed because it is administered by institutions with a long history of work on the protection of minority rights, such as UN, which in the year 1992 agreed on a Declaration on the Rights of All Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities. The United Nations has a minority working group that meets in Geneva every year and provides special advice and opinions on minority rights.

The OSCE established in 1992 the High Commissioner for National Minorities (HMNM), which has developed high expertise in the use and application of internationally recognized minority rights standards in order to prevent conflicts. With resources set in Kosovo, it is likely that minority rights will be fully protected. Instead, after many years of international expertise, the situation of minorities in Kosovo in 2006 was catastrophic. With the arrival of the forces and the international administration in 1999, there was a huge wave that can only be described as ethnic cleansing: targeted attacks on minorities to drive them out of their homes. The result was the departure of most Serbs from Kosovo, and the relocation of a large number of Roma and Albanians (the latter from Serbian areas). Five years later, in 2004, this example was repeated.

In the daily protection of the basic rights of minorities is in essence the right to everyone to live in a society where they can speak in their own language, and to practice their culture and religion freely. This trend has led to an increasingly large segregation between Albanians and Serbs, even at village level, while all other groups are massively marginalized. Talks on Kosovo's future status have not yet brought any ideas for resolving this situation. It's obvious that something has not gone right. Understanding how the international administration failed to comprehend and apply minority rights is critical for two reasons. First, it is important for the immediate future of Kosovo. Whatever is next status; discussions should include a structure that will ensure that the rights of minorities will be fully implemented and thus allow everyone to live freely learning from the mistakes of the past years. However, it is also vital to maintain peace in the future that those involved in international missions learn why the UN and the OSCE have not used their human rights knowledge in such a critical mission.

2. Ethnic groups in Kosovo

As is often the case, group members are reluctant to refer to them as a minority, having as their main issue the opportunity to live freely, speak their language, and practice their culture and religion. For Serbs, in particular, there is a fear that if they are referred to as 'minorities' in Kosovo at the same time, they admit that Kosovo is an independent state (as Serbs are not a minority in Serbia as a whole country). For this reason, the term 'community' is most frequently used in Kosovo, and this is the term used for the rights conferred by the Constitutional Framework. However, the term 'minority' is the most objective term. This term refers to a group based on nationality, ethnicity, language or religion that is minority in a particular location. In the Eighth Assessment of the Situation of Kosovo's Minorities in Kosovo, the OSCE and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said:

'Although aware of the ever-increasing complexity and sensitivity surrounding minority issues and aware of the tendency for local communities to speak as opposed to minorities, we have maintained the structure and terminology of previous reports. This is not done by non-susceptibility but due to efficiency. Therefore, we continue to use the term "minority", since use simply refers to any community living in a situation where they are numerical minorities in relation to the communities that surround them. As such, the term is applicable to Kosovo Serbs in Gracanica / Ulpiana as well as for Kosovo Albanians in northern Mitrovica.'

This is a fully-fledged approach in Kosovo. The terms 'minority' and 'minority rights' are needed when a particular ethnic, religious or racial group lacks power, usually being a numerical minority in the area where government power lies. In Kosovo this means that any other group except Albanians is a minority. Albanians are a minority in Kosovo Serb-dominated areas, such as the three northern municipalities, the north of Mitrovica and the south of the Shterpce municipality (UNHCR / OSBE, 2010).

2.1. Serbian minority

As noted above, Serbs have lived in Kosovo for centuries. Kosovo has a special significance for Serbs due to the monasteries and legends related to the battle of 1389. Serbs, however, have for many years been a numerical minority in Kosovo. In some parts of Kosovo, Serbs formed a majority,

including three municipalities in the north, Štrpce / Shtërpçë municipality in the south and the town of Fushë Kosovë / Kosovo Polje near Pristina in the center.

2.2. Roma minority

It is believed that the Roma have come to the Balkans in the 13th century. They can be found throughout Kosovo and most of them are non-existent. Some of them have accepted Islam, and some have become Orthodox Christians. Some of them (mostly Muslim) have accepted Albanian as their first language, some Serbo-Croat, while others have preserved the Roma language. From the 1990s onwards, there was a clear division of Roma into three self-identified groups.

Under the Ottoman Empire, a large number of Slavic speakers (mostly Serbian-Croat) accepted Islam. They formed the majority of the republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the Sandzak region in Serbia and Montenegro immediately in the north of Kosovo. The group was recognized as a national identification by Yugoslavia in 1961, with an enumeration category of '*Muslims by ethnic meaning*'. During the Bosnian war in the 1990s, the term '*Bosniak*' was adopted for this group, while the Bosnian language was promoted as different from the Serbian and Croatian languages (UNHCR / OSBE, 2010).

2.3. Gorani minority

The Gorani community located in the mountainous region of Gora in the south-west, which is certainly the farthest region of Kosovo, are also Muslims and Slavs, but different from the Bosniaks. In 1999, there were about 12,000 Gorani counted, while smaller communities were located in the largest cities in Kosovo.

From 1450 to 1912, Kosovo was governed by the Ottoman Empire and the language of the government was Turkish. Many Turks have fled to Turkey to escape war or unemployment. The critical issue for Turks has been the recognition and protection of their language.

2.4. Albanian minority

Albanians for a considerable period have been a majority in Kosovo. However, they have been a minority in Serbia as a whole country and have suffered from policies aimed at reducing their number and influence in Kosovo, culminating in the removal of their political power in 1989, the loss

of labor and the linguistic rights, and ethnic cleansing in March-June 1999. With the removal of the FRY authorities in June 1999, Albanians again came to power in Kosovo. However, they have been or have become a minority in Serb-dominated areas, including the three northern municipalities, the north of Mitrovica and the Shtërpcë / Shtërpcë Municipality in the south. In areas where Albanians are a minority, they have often experienced problems similar to those of minorities in other parts of Kosovo (including expulsion from their homes, discrimination and restrictions on the use of their language).

3. Security issues

In Kosovo, the critical issue for most minorities has been daily security. Organized violence, harassment and attacks on property have started since the beginning of the international administration and have continued to date. Minorities do not feel adequately protected by the authorities in Kosovo. Systematic and organized ethnic cleansing took place in 1999 and 2004, but all the time constant uncertainty has been chronic. What is critical is not just the current uncertainty but also the perception of minorities as to whether they can be adequately protected.

When we consider the issue of security over the years it can be said that it has come bombarded. After the first wave of attacks in 1999, authorities stopped with a reduction by the end of 1999. This was followed by another demonstration of violence in February 2000, following an UNHCR bus attack on minorities. Later that year, the number of attacks fell, marking a success. Once again, this was followed by a new wave of attacks on minorities, mainly with the shelling of the "Niš express" bus that carried Serbs in February 2001, in which 10 people were killed. A further reduction of violence in 2003 ended with attacks in March 2004 as outlined above. It seems that during this period various attacks have been organized. No one can speak for a normal situation any time, having minorities that feel adequately safe and protected (USAID, 2012).

In addition to the daily fears that have been caused to minorities forcing them to leave their homes and, if left in Kosovo, gathered in mono-ethnic enclaves, a critical result was the restriction on the freedom of movement. Minorities were afraid to move freely, and they needed escorts to do so. Again, in addition to the violation of the fundamental rights, this has made it difficult for them to access employment and services, including health,

education and social assistance. For nearly seven years, international authorities have been unable to find policies that will lead to a permanent and lasting increase in the security of minorities. Responses are hampered by the lack of security co-ordination and confusing responsibility.

Following the end of the 1999 conflict, overall development and accountability for public order and security sector in Kosovo was largely in the hands of the international military presence. The role of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) and the powers granted under Resolution 1244 paved the way for the establishment of the First Pillar of UNMIK, covering security and justice sectors in Kosovo. Specifically, the overall responsibility for the establishment and monitoring of security institutions in Kosovo remained in the hands of the SRSG and UNMIK (Qehaja, F., (KCSS), 2010).

In 1999-2000, a critical issue was the failure of all states to provide adequate police - UNMIK police did not get full of staff until the end of 2000. As noted above, KFOR did not become a subject of civil control, therefore he operated independently. At the same time, and apparently this has been critical, for years, Kosovars have not been given responsibility for security. The Kosovo Police Service was soon established and has a good minority recruitment file. However, the passage of power to this body has proceeded quite slowly. UNMIK has kept direct control over security (police) and justice, even after the establishment of the IPVS. Similarly, the establishment of a justice system has required a very long time (UNMIK, 2000).

It is therefore not surprising that the authorities' response to the needs of minorities has been non-existent. KFOR, which consists of armies, and not police forces, initially provided control posts, patrols and escorts. This was requested by the minorities. Efforts have been made to deal with the issue of freedom of movement by raising new paths and for a period of time, UNHCR has been running a bus service for minorities. Later, however, KFOR removed most of its permanent installations since the number of troops was reduced.

3.1. Security measures

Some new laws have been adopted in an effort to address ethnic hatred and make accusations easier. The first regulation to ban the promotion of racial hatred is however rarely used, as it is considered that it is not drafted properly. It seems that UNMIK has not used any of the many available

models in the rest of Europe. The Temporary Media Commissioner in Kosovo has not taken action to punish newspapers for racial hatred, but again there appears to be no coordinated approach (Vrajolli, M., (KCSS), 2010).

The effect of the military measures undertaken has been made to reinforce segregation. Unless the goal is for Kosovo to be eternally divided into armed camps, measures that separate communities can not be more than just a temporary solution. Current problems should be addressed but so far they have not been addressed. And most importantly, apart from the great evidence of the organized nature of ethnic cleansing and violence, no leader has been persecuted. While only a few people have been prosecuted for attacking minorities, these measures have been of a low level. The approach seems to have been to appoint those in power who have been accused of organizing violence. Since 1999, there have been assumptions that attempts to investigate and arrest high figures in Kosovo have been prevented for political reasons.

The Kosovo Declaration of Independence on 17 February 2008 sparked a series of dangerous events in Serbia. The nationalists' anger over the loss of a province considered the cradle of Serbian culture and religion appeared in public demonstrations and in some cases of violence, including attacks on embassies and western businesses. During a rally in Belgrade on February 21, 2008, several hundred individuals were diverted from the rest of the crowd to attack policemen and journalists. Attacks on embassies and clashes in Belgrade were widely transmitted by foreign and local media. However, what largely escalated the attention of the media was the threatening and harassing actions faced by Serb ethnic Albanians, but especially in the province of Vojvodina in the coming days (Human Right Watch, 2009).

In February and March 2008, Police registered 221 incidents related to Kosovo protests, including those that did not have ethnic motivation, of which 190 occurred in Vojvodina, damaging mostly Albanian-owned businesses and homes many of them these incidents resulted in damage caused by criminals such as broken glass and tentacled arson, splashing with inscriptions that contained hatred, threatening protests in front of apartments and businesses, in one case an Albanian-owned boycott and distribution of leaflets feed.

This kind of violence against minorities is not new to Serbia. Especially ethnic Albanians have been affected, especially when developments in

Kosovo were accompanied by tensions. They have been targeted, for example, in 1999, during the NATO bombing campaign. A wave of violence involving attacks on minority-owned businesses and mosques appeared between the end of 2003 and 2005 to reach the peak in March 2004 when nationalist sentiments responded to the anti-Serbian riots.

One of the most important goals of a peace operation in post-war societies is to establish conditions for a sustainable security. Therefore, building a sustainable peace is a necessity to build: human security, a concept that includes democratic governance, human rights, order and justice, sustainable development, etc. Moreover, the importance of having a precondition for the development of a society, more than 70 of about 190 states in the international system, are vulnerable to so-called "failed state" syndrome due to a security gap that reigns within them. In the wake of these statements, it will not be too hard to conclude that security represents the essential prerequisite for building and developing state capacities in a society that is under the conditions of its fragility.

But what matters most to be analyzed refers to how the international community and these societies themselves will be able to manage this sector so that it can serve as an essential prerequisite for the overall development of these societies. When we are in the context of state-building in Kosovo, it is very important to analyze how the international community has managed the foreign and internal security sector in Kosovo in the post-war emergency period and how it later influenced reforming the security system in general.

The task of providing security in post-war Kosovo was divided between four security mechanisms: NATO troops (KFOR), which were responsible for general order and security on the basis of Resolution 1244 and a bilateral agreement with Belgrade (Technical Co-operative Agreement of Kumanovo - MTA); UNMIK Civilian Police (CIVPOL), in cooperation with the local Kosovo Police Service (KPS) structure, as well as the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC).

As a result of constant hostilities and political disagreements between the Albanian and Serbian populations, northern Kosovo has seen an informal process of separation and unwillingness of local communities to cooperate with foreign parties. The unsuccessful efforts of Kosovo's institutions and the international administration to facilitate the process of development in the region have resulted in the deepening of this de facto partition of the north with Serb majority population from the rest of

Kosovo, and have placed themselves in the center of attention throughout Kosovo the perceived political struggle between Serbs and Albanians. For people living in northern Kosovo, these unresolved issues and the ambiguous institutional framework imply that they are continuing to face insecurity and weak rule of law (Saferworld, 2013).

4. Interethnic dialogue and dealing with the past

Recent data shows that there continues to be division between communities, between Kosovo Albanians and Kosovo Serbs in particular. The last two years, significant from the progress of the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue facilitated by the European Union (Brussels Dialogue), have shown a more positive climate for promoting tolerance and diversity between communities, and between Kosovo Albanians and Kosovo Serbs. The integration of four Serb-majority northern Kosovo municipalities into Kosovo's institutional structures and the associated accompanying participation of Kosovo Serbs in these institutions are important indicators of progress in inter-ethnic relations. Despite the improved climate and the legal commitment to "promoting a peaceful spirit, tolerance, intercultural and interreligious dialogue and supporting reconciliation between communities", institutional efforts to promote tolerance and diversity among different communities in Kosovo are largely dependent on donors.

At the central level, the greatest achievement to date is the establishment of a working group on dealing with the past and reconciliation, chaired by the Prime Minister's Office and members of a number of ministries and civil society organizations. Although formally established in June 2012, the working group has not met regularly and has made minimal progress in developing the Transitional Justice Strategy, as well as having problems in terms of the very limited representation of communities (the participation of Serbs living in Kosovo is usually limited to one participant). As of June 30, 2015, the working group has failed to agree on the time frame that the strategy should cover, despite the considerable support and encouragement provided by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) project, and specifically designed to support the group (The Global Development Research Center, 2016).

At the municipal level, there has been little systematic effort to bring communities closer. Officially supported interaction tends to be limited to the participation of community representatives with specific functions in

municipal bodies, with relevant mandates for community protection at local level, such as community committees (MAs) that function as part of municipal assemblies. In general, despite the progress achieved by OSCE field monitoring, the Vice Presidents for Communities (NKK) and Deputy Municipal Assembly Committees (MOCRs) still do not fully respond to their role and mandate to promote inter-ethnic dialogue through limited engagement.

The tensions between communities regarding the return of displaced persons continue to be repeated. Reception communities in different locations continue to express opposition to the return or reintegration of displaced persons as well as to religious pilgrimage of displaced persons and visits to cemeteries in some municipalities. Monitoring by the OSCE shows in the majority of cases limited municipal efforts to address these tensions and build trust. In this endeavor, the political co-operation of the Mayors of Mitrovica North and South Mitrovica is included in order to address the tensions in Kroi i Vitakut, a contested land of ethnically mixed return located in the administrative border area of these two municipalities. This led to the establishment of a working group in June 2015, one of the three established in Kosovo with support from the central level, in order to improve the relations between communities in countries where returns are difficult.

However, through its monitoring, the OSCE has identified several initiatives implemented by mayors. In May 2015, with OSCE support, the mayors of the municipalities of Strpce, Ferizaj and Klokot signed a joint statement to promote inter-ethnic dialogue and appointed officials for co-operation in implementing activities in 2015 and 2016 with municipal funding. This declaration of cooperation between these three municipalities came as a follow-up to the first initiative, agreement and declaration of 2013 between the municipalities of Gjilan, Kamenica, Novo Brdo and Ranilug, which supported some not very large activities. Another positive example, though again after international support, was the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the municipality of Suva Reka and the International Organization for Migration for the implementation of a return project and activities related to dialogue in the village of Mushtishtë.

Kosovo's media are still ethnically polarized, often biased and incomplete, as well as based on the use of sources of journalists that are limited to their communities. Problems of this nature are also added to the language barrier that is a significant obstacle to improving perceptions and

relationships between communities, a matter related to the fact that the media often do not engage employees from different communities.

Despite the fact that political instability is a common denominator of the countries many challenges regarding its human security, institutions and people in general still lack a sense of security beyond the traditional / realistic viewpoint and are therefore not accepting the correlation of directly negative that political instability has with their human security. In this sense, Kosovo's institutions and society in general focus on security issues that are largely of a traditional understanding, such as the military, police and intelligence, and are less or less focused on issues related to human and social security, so important for national security, especially for a country of the size of Kosovo. The concept of human security includes a number of different factors, including economic, health, food, political, community, environmental and personal security.

According to (Annan, K., 2001): "*Human security, in its wider sense, embraces much more than the lack of violent conflict, including human rights, good governance, access to education and health care, and each individual has the opportunity and the choice to fulfill his or her potential. Every step in this direction is also a major step towards reducing poverty, achieving economic growth and preventing conflict. Freedom from Desire, Freedom from Freedom and Freedom of future generations to inherit a healthy natural environment - these are the interconnected blocks that build human security - and consequently the national one.*" (Annan, K., 2001). Although the focus of human security differs from that of the national security, both are closely linked. Human security is very important not only for the country's well-being, but also for national security, stability and overall development.

Much of the focus on security issues in Kosovo has been focused on the creation of the Armed Forces of Kosovo and the prevention of radicalization and violent extremism. Focusing only on these two aspects of security has allowed ignorance of serious fundamental issues for human security and social security in the country, which, if not dealt with, pose a serious threat to national security as a whole. The lack of economic growth and opportunities for Kosovo's citizens has become a serious challenge in consolidating Kosovo as a stable state. National security and access to opposing violent extremism has so far failed to address one of the key potential issues for Kosovo, the identity crisis of a largely new population that is overloaded with information and change in an environment that has not provided proper support (Coleman, 2016).

While the goal of a new country such as Kosovo must be to make a state capable and ready to fulfill its duties and obligations towards its citizens, Kosovo remains major deficiencies in various areas related to human security citizens of Kosovo. These shortcomings make Kosovar citizens even more vulnerable, especially in an environment where political stability is at the worst level and where early elections seem to plummet almost every government mandate, making Kosovo's progress even more inadequate (Kabashi-Rama, B., 2007).

International practices in cases of conflict within the state, such as Kosovo, pose problems. Conflicts within the state represent an anomaly in the traditional normative framework of the international order. As the case of Kosovo showed, the concept based on the sovereignty and territorial inviolability of the state revealed that they were detrimental, because human values were sacrificed for their sake. International efforts to maintain the existing normative system through the policy of derecognition can give value to the war if the claims of various ethnic groups of self-determination face constant oppression and rape. War threatens to become a threat to international order by affecting not only the state concerned, but all the countries in the region. Attempts to maintain order can produce opposite effects, namely war and lack of order (Saferworld, 2013).

According to (White, G., 2007): "*recognizing the right of another nation for independence may not be the primary problem, recognition is refused to prevent an even more difficult problem: Which nation receives which territory as part of the declaration of independence?*" In today's normative framework, the answer is defined in *uti possidetis* terms. The applicability of this principle is intended to challenge divisive arguments based on ethnicity and exclusivity. A sense of the world with "*states acting as strongholds for mutually exclusive identities*" and "*sovereignty as the foundation of social relationships between them is in practice misleading because it does not take into account the consequences of state action on its people*".

Moreover, this framework inspires Serbia to continue the policy of not recognizing Kosovo's independence and even make all efforts to cancel it. The traditional normative framework remains exclusive and perpetuates patterns of exploitation, alienation or discrimination that create sources for conflict, and consequently create grounds for breaking the international order. The Kosovo case continues to bring diverse evidence to support this argument. Even today, the non-recognition of Kosovo's independence from Serbia, the ambiguity and slowness that still accompanies the process of

recognizing Kosovo's independence is likely to pave the way for a future failure of international diplomacy to consolidate the new state of Kosovo and in addition to maintaining peace and stability in the region.

5. The impact of ethnic conflicts on Kosovo's transition

Kosovo has experienced a complex conflict of conflict and mistrust between ethnic groups and state structures. The chain of conflicts in this region has attracted considerable international attention. Therefore, Kosovo, after its independence, has had to face more problems which became even more distinct with the decision and aspiration to join the European Union. Lack of stability and poor state security structures have created a security vacuum. Numerous international actors have been involved directly and indirectly through various missions and programs in order to bring lasting and stable stability to Kosovo. The war between 1998 and 1999 (often referred to as armed conflict) initially between Serbia (its military and police structures) and ethnic Albanians (armed formations), and later between Serbia and NATO and the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), left Kosovo largely destroyed and damaged. Therefore, while other countries in the region were transitioning, Kosovo and its society were in a post-conflict period (Kosovar Center for Security Studies, 2013).

Membership aspirations and EU prospects along with EU assistance have created the basis for regional, political and socio-economic development cooperation. Kosovo is facing serious challenges in terms of weak rule of law, interethnic tensions and lack of regional co-operation, especially in the security sector. Having a comprehensive security sector and greater regional cooperation is seen as a stabilizing mechanism, first being able to provide security for citizens and ensuring that the region will not become a security challenge for the European Union (European Commission, 2013).

In the case of Kosovo, it is quite clear that certain processes are dragging on due to its assigned international position. On its path to the EU, Kosovo is also challenged by states that do not recognize (five member states) its independence. Therefore, although European support in general was great and covered reconstruction, institution building, or support for rule of law and security through the world's largest civilian mission to date, Kosovo is undergoing reforms that other states in the region have already implemented them. In particular, this refers to visa liberalization efforts, a

process closely related to border control and the management of illegal immigration. (Zupančić, R., 2009)

Over the past decade, the international community has invested considerable resources in reconstructing and maintaining peace in Kosovo. Due to political developments in Kosovo, the presence and contribution of the international community in the country is divided into two main phases: the first period covering the years 1999 and 2007 and the second period between 2008-2013 covering developments following the declaration of independence. Therefore, the role and involvement of the European Union in Kosovo are also shaped and reflected in these two key phases.

During 1999-2007, Kosovo has received donations of 3.5 billion euros, two thirds of which came from the European Commission and EU member states. In the period after independence, during 2009-2011, the European Commission has allocated 508 million euros. In general, Kosovo is considered to be the largest recipient of EU assistance (per capita) around the world. However, in the pre-independence period (1999-2007), the EU was not involved or was a little involved in developing the security sector in Kosovo. With the declaration of independence in 2007 and the establishment of the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX), the EU's involvement and role in the rule of law sector was deepened.

Despite strong assistance and cooperation between the EU and local authorities, progress in advancing the rule of law and developments in combating corruption and organized crime remains very low. Although EULEX has been shown to face less challenges in overseeing and assisting the security sector (police, judiciary and customs), the fight against corruption and organized crime remain the biggest enemies of Kosovo. The fact that EULEX has failed to ensure successful capacity in the justice sector can be the strongest reason why citizens have lost their faith in this mission. This is reflected in the perception of citizens according to the latest survey conducted by KCSS, where only 33% of respondents were satisfied with the work of EULEX (Kosovo Center for Security Studies, 2013).

The degree of the proliferation of integration processes and globalization that has included the world and all peoples in virtually all spheres of life has made the qualification of problems and conflicts of different kinds as "*internal affairs*" to appear not only absurd but also qualify as non-democratic and non-human, and as a result, action and response to these conflicts has almost always been a global response. This

action, which is guaranteed by the UN Charter, has not only the moral legitimacy as it is characterized by many opponents of democracy, but also legal and democratic, supported and guaranteed in international institutions. The issue of Kosovo strongly demonstrates this fact.

Even in post-war Kosovo and after Kosovo's declaration of independence, the Kosovo Government's commitments to Euro-Atlantic integration have been in the first place, this is best evidenced by the approval of the Kosovo Constitution, which guarantees all communities are not encountered in any constitution of any other country. The engagement in the Kosovo-Serbia dialogue initiated and mediated by the EU where the Kosovo side is committed to solving the problems in the north of the country on the European and integration paths proves that Kosovo excludes violence as a means of resolving conflicts by serving only by peaceful methods and through negotiations. Arritation of eventual agreement with Serbian side even further opens way to Kosovo towards EU integrations

6. Conclusion

One of the key priorities for Kosovo, which can create stability in the new state of the Western Balkans and which should be the goal of politicians, experts and citizens of Kosovo, is the complex and sustainable prevention of conflict at all the spheres of political, economic, social and cultural life. (Kouchner, B., 1999) wrote: *"If ethnic hatred triumphs, then everything that people of good will in Kosovo and their friends in the international community have fought over the past years would have been hopeless."*

The situation of minorities in Kosovo today is not as it should be. Authorities have not been able to provide the primary protection, that of minorities, so that they have the opportunity to live and practice their way of life in security. After many years, minorities are still displaced, unable to live in their homes. Kosovo is a segregated society without a vision for integration or a clear plan for ending discrimination. Minorities largely remain helpless to affect the decisions that matter.

Lessons learned from these last years strongly argue a different approach that will lead to the end of segregation in Kosovo. Negotiations on future status should lead to a breach of ethnic conflicts in Kosovo, and to guarantee true equality for all, and the right to live freely and to practice their language, religion and culture. Unless a radical change is made, the

history of the international protectorate will become a major failure of the international community's ability, particularly the UN, to manage post-conflict situations and to create a long-term solution to ethnic problems.

The international community as a whole supports Kosovo's transition to a contemporary state. However, it is promising that an important part of the international community supports this state of the country, with the overwhelming majority of the EU, the United States, and some other important players, is a good starting point for Kosovo. The EU (EULEX), though having legal and moral status questioned in several parts of Kosovo, has managed to develop a structural approach to conflict prevention, but it remains for Kosovo to decide whether or not to use them. The operational conflict prevention so far has managed to prevent new bloody episodes in the Western Balkans, but the success of structural conflict prevention will be the key to Kosovo's failure or success.

It would be pretentious to advise the political elites in Kosovo on which conflict prevention strategies to use. It is up to them to choose and decide on the approach, based on the political, economic, social and cultural specificities of the new political realities in the Western Balkans. It will be their merit to harvest the fruits of the successful transition and the peaceful coexistence of their peoples, as if it were to be responsible for the possible failure. It is true that what they inherited (de jure with the declaration of independence, and de facto since 1999 when the international community's protectorate was established) is not to be envied.

It is also vital to adopt a security concept that is most appropriate to the current global security environment and combines the traditional realistic security viewpoint and the importance of state threats with a wider security concept today consider the threats to the people. In this way, addressing human security, the greatest priority will be given to people and their well-being, while simultaneously reducing a domestic threat to the state, as the primary agent in international relations, enhancing the prospect of stability, peace and order.

However, none of the aforementioned can begin to occur without the necessary political stability. In this sense, it is the responsibility of Kosovo's political leaders to gain a mentality in the short term that focuses more on what Kosovo and its people really need and what is vital to the survival and self-reliance of this country than the interest of the political parties to which they belong. In the short term, only a conscious decision to shift

political thinking can break the vicious cycle of political instability that has overtaken Kosovo.

The concept of security as a whole needs to be revised and redefined in order to reflect the world as it is today. This may also mean that the role of the state should be considered in the light of these changes. What is certainly clear, theoretically and in practice, is that national security is related to human security and that the security of human security and the social security of the population must be safeguarded to preserve the state of national security. This means that people who live within a state need to be provided with space and means to meet their human security needs and to preserve their ethnic, cultural, religious and national identities, such as a way to preserve national security.

In this sense, the responsibility for providing such space and tools falls on the political leaders in the country, whose ultimate responsibility as elected officials must be to care for the needs of the population they are elected to represent. Moreover, their political decisions should also be based on setting appropriate priorities, beginning with how their political decisions will affect the people they are intended to represent before thinking of how will affect their political agendas.

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