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EUROPEAN SECURITY AS AN ISSUE OF COHERENCE

A Perspective on the Western Balkans

ABSTRACT

The crux of the argument of the paper is that the distinction between "hard", military security, and "soft" security, which has been repeatedly proclaimed the priority of the EU, primarily as it relates to terrorism and organised crime, renders the current foreign policy positioning of the Western Balkans crucially important to European Security. The paper briefly discusses the way in which the former Yugoslav territories have served as factual testing grounds for numerous new security threats that have emanated from the area over the past decade, including an increased ethnic militancy. Such militancy is in the process of merging with classic terrorist motivations in the Serbian region of Sandžak, which have recently been additionally adversely affected by divisions within the Muslim community that are suspected to have been encouraged from the outside. In addition, the unresolved "soft" security issues in the South of Serbia (the municipalities of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medvedja, where until recently an ethnic Albanian "Liberation Army of Preševo Bujanovac and Medvedja" has been active, and the crime-control problems in Kosovo, all pose challenges for the definition of a new EU security policy towards the region. The paper argues for the strict application of security protocols that relate to terrorist and organised crime activity across Europe, and for concrete policies of EU conditionality when negotiating concrete steps in the accession of the Western Balkans. Such policies would be more focused

on advancing internal security, and less on standard political conditioning. This line of argument is supported by a brief analysis of the results of the exclusively political conditioning, where the current situation in most parts of the former Yugoslavia is such that it brings back strong memories of the party-state. Internal security protocols in the region are insufficiently focused on addressing terrorism and organised crime, even though these are the threats declared as primary security issues within the EU.

Key words: models of security, military and non-military approaches, security protocols/strict application of, criminalization/organised crime, terrorism, political transparency, political party-state, organisation of security policy.

1. Corrolaries of the primacy of "soft" security for the EU's Western Balkans policy

Over the past several years the academic security discourse has adopted the concept of "soft" security as somewhat of a conventional wisdom. Policy discourse has followed suit. Hence, it has been almost politically incorrect to argue against the idea that soft security threats, primarily terrorism and organised crime, with the possible addition of ethnic unrest, are the exclusive domain of security policy, while the traditional military conflict between states is a non-issue for European states. As Martin Elvins formulated it, the European Union is supposed to be a more or less harmonious super-national concert of states with the exclusive powers of soft security policy initiative and approval resting with member states, but their policy is envisaged as being developed entirely on the basis of intergovernmental decision-making, principally through the Council of the European Union.[1] The third European pillar of decision making, Justice and Home Affairs, is thus a full reflection of the concert of states in one of the most sensitive security areas for any individual state. Soft security threats are sensitive not just because they threaten the everyday security of European citizens in ways reaching far beyond the limits of any other security threat, but also because the methods used to address soft security issues, such as the prodigious use of intelligence agencies, may in themselves become a threat. Subsuming such policies under a coordination resting in the Council is indeed a commitment that positions Europe as a single actor towards any outside areas wherefrom soft security threats might emanate. Such a structural position makes it necessary to discuss foreign security policy quite separately from the joint Justice and Home Affairs within the EU. It is in this context that the frequent discussions in the EU of the Western Balkans and the former Soviet Union as "exporting grounds of orga-nised crime and terrorism" should be understood, rather than as discriminatory discourses based on

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[1] Martin Elvins, "Europe's response to transnational organised crime", in Adam Edwards & Peter Gill (eds), *Transnational Organised Crime: Perspectives on global security*, Routledge, London, 2003, p. 39, footnote 1.

assumptions that there is more soft insecurity outside, than inside the EU. Even if there are fewer soft insecurity threats outside the EU than within it, the common justice affairs hat requires the EU to look towards the outside with a different set of instruments and policies than that applied through the third pillar coordination mechanism within the Union.

The grasp of the meaning of soft security differs in various discussions, but most generally it could be confined within the area covered by three dominant security threats that are neither traditionally dealt with by the military structures, nor do they typically involve the conventional use of such structures. The threats include: terrorism, organised crime, and ethnic unrest or conflict. The specificity of the areas emerging from authoritarian rule, such as the Western Balkans and the former Soviet Union, is that the three types of soft insecurity often collude and intertwine in ways not entirely obvious to the outside eye. Ethnic unrest in traditionally poor societies is more than often fed by traditional criminality, and its modus operandi almost regularly includes some of the terrorist tactics designed to induce fear and mobilise the international community to become involved. This has been the case in almost all wars of Yugoslav succession, as well as in the conflicts in the former Soviet Union, where the Chechen movement has largely resembled the current crisis over Kosovo in Serbia, and where the long-drawn debate over the status and future of the Ukraine resembled the painful separation of the federal units of the former Yugoslavia. To the extent that the Russian Federation, as the core country of the former Soviet area, has re-grown into a global power, it has been able to contain many of the side-effects of the soviet disintegration, at least in those dimensions that could translate into spill-over effects and thus concern the international community acutely. At the same time, to the extent that Serbia, as arguably the core country of the former Yugoslav area, has not managed to re-assert itself either economically or militarily in its region, many of the spill-over effects of the Western Balkans continue to threaten the broader European environment, including the potent mixture of ethnic conflict, organised crime, and terrorism. This is a very general statement that thus, necessarily, misses many other circumstances that influence the level of security threats, but geo-strategically speaking the statures of the dominant countries in their regions largely determine the profile and volume of the threats emanating from the region towards the outside world.

While in the post-Soviet space the main threat to the outside world arose from an uncontrolled proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, primarily the nuclear material stolen from abandoned Soviet nuclear plants and from looted army depots, in the post-Yugoslav space the threat arises mainly from anarchy and structural corruption that, apart from being partially endemic to the region, have

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[2] See my "Security threats in Southeastern Europe and Ways to Respond to Them", in Aleksandar Fatić (ed.), *Security in Southeastern Europe*, The Management Centre, Belgrade, 2004, pp. 1–28.

also set in due to failing institutions. In an environment of stifled institutions, corruption becomes a as a natural functional supplement to everyday survival.[2]

The structure of the threat in the post-Soviet area rested on the fact that, after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, twelve of the fifteen successor states were able to produce nuclear material, both technologically and with a view of the expertise required. Four of these countries, namely Russia itself, the Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakstan inherited nuclear weapons as such. Ukraine, for example, had 1,840 nuclear research centres and related enterprises, with 2.7 million people (representing roughly 5 percent of the total population) employed in military industry. In addition, the Ukraine was equipped with substantial chemical, biological and space missile technology.[3] The problem was compounded by the circumstance that the large territory meant that all the twelve states could serve as transit points for the smuggling of weapons, and several of the borders were suitable for transporting such cargos to undesirable end-consumers. Owing to the large influence of the Russian Federation, eventually the weapons of mass destruction were returned to it by all the countries that had inherited them, thus diminishing dramatically the risk of such arms being used uncontrollably. Similarly, the regional authority of Russia seems to have prevented large-scale spillage of WMDs globally. Such results in curtailing potentially devastating soft security threats that could quickly escalate into hard ones (if WMDs were used by terrorists, for example) were truly impressive and have made a major contribution to fostering global security.

When the former Yugoslav area is concerned, however, the circumstances are very different indeed. For Serbia, they were perhaps most briefly, if crudely, described by Thomas Koeppel and Agnes Szekely:

Under Milosevic, the boundaries between the state and criminal organizations in Yugoslavia became increasingly indistinct. By the end of the Milosevic era in October 2000, criminal interests had infiltrated government to an alarming degree (…); in one British corruption survey, Yugoslavia scored 7.4 out of a possible 9 points, the worst rating in Eastern Europe's transition countries (Albania was second, with 5.7 points) (…). The Milošević regime's economic policy can only be characterized as theft. It started with the freezing of exchange rates and the expropriation of private foreign-currency holdings worth about U.S.$4 billion, continued with the collapse of pyramid scams like the ones that brought Albania to the brink of disaster, and culminated in hyperinflation. The Yugoslav economy was a victim of just about every form of corruption an autocratic regime can manage.[4]

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[3] Scott A. Jones, *Wither Ukraine? Weapons, state building, and international cooperation*, Ashgate Publishing, Aldershot, 2002, pp. 1–2.

[4] Thomas Koeppel & Anges Szekely, "Transnational Organized Crime and Conflict in the Balkans", in Mats Berdal & Monica Serrano (eds), *Transnational Organized Crime & International Security: Business as Usual?*, Lynne Rienner, Boulder (Co.), 2002, pp. 129–40.

The fault, of course, was not only with Milošević. The wars of the former Yugoslavia had been led using all the available resources and means, and this often included the active participation by paramilitaries, recruited mainly from the ranks of organised crime. Some of the dirty work in the operations of the so-called "terrain cleansing" after the main fighting had gone by certain areas could not be assigned to regular units, but organised crime and "patriots" in its ranks were ready to comply. Such assignments, along with the communist tradition of using the underworld for state-security assignments against political emigrants and other opponents abroad, indebted the governments to organised crime, and in fact they meant that organised crime had a stable grip on a part of official policy in all the Yugoslav successor states. This has most often been accented in relation to Serbia and Milošević, but it was almost equally the case in Bosnia, for example, where during the war the commander of the defence of Sarajevo had been Juka Prazina, a known leader of organised crime, who was later gunned down in a shooting conflagration with the Bosnian police.

In Serbia, October 5 2000 marked the break with Milošević, yet the new democratic leaders were seen on television screen surrounded by security guards some of whom were well-known as organised crime figures, not just to the police, but to the general population as well. The lack of confidence in the institutions inherited from Milošević, again, meant that the "strong lads from the Belgrade asphalt" were relied on for protection. Subsequently such individuals were officially recruited into the police, especially in the services in charge of guarding politicials, and have retained their influence over a part of Serbian politics.

In 2003, Serbian Prime Minister, Zoran Djindjić, fell victim to assassins in the courtyard of the Serbian Government building. The ensuing state of emergency netted some of the organised crime figures among the 10 000 arrests made in just a few weeks, but this was insufficient to stamp out a legacy of several decades of communist and post-communist rule that Serbia shared with the other Balkan countries, some of which, such as Bulgaria, are now full-fledged EU members. Long-standing links with organised crime have meant that stable coalitions between legitimate businesses, parts of the political establishments and the underworld have been extremely difficult to eradicate in most Balkans states. Such linkages, while resulting in speculative and sometimes over-inflated estimates of corruption, such as the ones mentioned by Koeppel and Szekely above, have special significance for the ability of the Balkans, and especially Western Balkan, states to curtain the soft security issues and their potential spill-over effects into the European neighbourhood.[5]

The priorities of EU security policy towards the Western Balkans, including the application of European conditionality, the pace of the integration of the Western Balkans, and the European posture towards the resolution of the territorial

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[5] See Sappho Xenakis, "Organised Crime in the Balkans: Pitfalls of Threat Assessment", in Fatić (ed.), loc. cit, pp. 187–212.

disputes in the region, should all be lined up with a sober and constructive estimate of the nature and volume of the security threat arising from the region. Such assessment should draw useful parallels with the post-Soviet space, yet it should also take into account both the strong sides and the deficiencies of the conditionality applied so far. It is the aim of the remainder of this paper to assist the making of such an estimate through the analysis of the current and emerging soft security issues with spill-over potential in the region, and of the current priorities for security protocols used against the standard security threats emanating from terrorism and organised crime. This hopefully leads to a proposal as to how European conditionality should be amended for the Western Balkans to better reflect the current geostrategic place of the region in the European soft security equation.

2. Dominant soft security issues in the Western Balkans with spillage potential

In a highly speculative account of the modern concept of security, perceived from the USA, David Campbell argues that the post-Cold War circumstances invite the concept of a "globalisation of contingency". Such contingency is bred by the wiping out of conservative borders of political activism, which have historically coincided with nation states, and rests on "(…) the contention that we live in a distinctive political time marked by the absence of a corresponding political space; that is to say, the activity of politics is no longer (assuming it once was) concomitant with the enclosure of politics (the state)."[6] The reach of political activism beyond the frontiers of traditional nation-state politics means that today anything, anywhere is subject to politics whose true actors, or holders of the interests reflected in it, are not always known. In such a world, distant regions may be of primary domestic political importance if sufficient investment of political capital is made in protecting human rights, political transparency, or whichever of the array of highly commendable values in the toolbox of globalisation. Hence, contingency is made global as well as politics, and "(t)he globalization of contingency involves the increasing tendencies towards ambiguity, indeterminacy, and uncertainty on our horizon. (…) While these have been long identified in academic international relations literature under the sign of "anarchy", these contingencies — from which comes their understanding as globalized — can no longer be contained within established power structures and spatializations."[7]

One way to confront the disarray arising from a globalised contingency has been to try to establish a global security governance. Attempts to this effect have been made mainly by the G8 group and the United Nations, and despite meagre

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[6] David Campbell, *Writing Security: The United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1992 (revised edition), p. 17.

[7] Loc. cit.

optimism, have not managed to come anywhere close to effectively addressing the most menacing contingencies such as generalised lawlessness, terrorism and organised crime.[8]

Within Europe, it was the Western Balkans that represented the first test for the attempt to build a European consensus on security policy, and more specifically for the idea of building a European pillar of NATO through the European Defence Identity. The idea, launched by US President Clinton at the NATO summit in 1992, soon proved to be very difficult, as negotiations to create an effective European Combined Joint Task Forces, whereby Europeans, when addressing security threats in whose resolution the US did not want to be involved, could use a broad range of NATO assets, including the US-owned transport facilities, seemed to meander about the core issue of how far a European decision making could be kept independent of the US if relying on NATO resources. In her 2001 book on the failure of the US to allow a redistribution of power in Europe in line with the pace of European integration, Sophie Vanhoonacker writes:

It is the Yugoslav crisis which ultimately made both Europeans and Americans accept the importance and the urgency of a debate revising their respective roles in the Alliance. The poor performance of the Europeans considerably strengthened the position of the Atlanticists arguing that a stronger European security role could best be realised by further developing the European pillar of NATO. Even France came to the conclusion that the European security debate could not be confined to the EC framework alone and that if Paris did not want to be marginalised, a closer relationship with NATO was inevitable. It is easier to influence a debate from within than from sitting on the sidelines (…) To the United States, Yugoslavia has also provided a sobering lesson. While on the one hand it has confirmed the American view that the European Community is not ready to take over the Alliance's tasks, it has also led to a clarification of its own future role on the old continent. It has made Washington realise that in the post-1989 period there may be an increasing number of "small" crises in which the United States does not necessarily want to intervene. If it wants NATO to continue to play a central role, it has to foresee the possibility that in such cases the Europeans can act without American involvement, but with the support of NATO resources.[9]

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[8] For a useful account, see John J. Kirton & Junichi Takase (eds), *New Directions in Global Political Governance: The G8 and the international order in the twenty-first century*, Ashgate, Aldershot, 2002, especially John J. Kirton, "The G8, the United Nations and Global Security Governance", pp. 191–207.

[9] Sophie Vanhoonacker, *The Bush Administration (1989–1993) and the Development of a European Security Identity*, Ashgate, Aldershot, 2001, pp. 227–8. See also Tommy Jeppsson, Mika Kerttunen & Tommi Koivula, "EU Battle Groups", in Bo Huldt, Mika Kerttunen, Jan MOertberg & Ylva Ericsson (eds), *European Security and Defence Policy: A European Challenge, Strategic Yearbook 2006*, Finnish National Defence College & Swedish National Defence College, Stockholm, 2006, pp. 69–80.

Clearly the European debate about security from contingency that cannot be traditionally "spacialised", namely from threats that emanate from the outside, yet remain within the European courtyard, has revolved about the acquisition of military attributes that would guarantee that Europe could police its neighbourhood even in the absence of an American will to do so. The conviction that such security can be, in fact that it can only be provided by assuming a military guise, is not new, and has been expressed by a number or European realists, such as by Headley Bull in 1983. "From a mainstream realist perspective, Bull argued bluntly that the notion of a 'civilian power' is a contradiction in terms (…) Only if the Community developed a military capability and became a military power could it be a successful international actor."[10]

The main problem with this approach is clear. European debates, like many in the broad international circles, have tended to be influenced by a European brinkmanship with the US and the romantic echoes of the federalist idea of "the United States of Europe" that would be equal to the US not just economically, but also as a military power. Such European enthusiasm has since subsided substantially, yet the decades lost it trying to turn Europe into a military power have meant that Europe has failed to realise just how quickly soft insecurity has replaced the traditional security challenges on the continent. The European failure in the former Yugoslavia was premised on the assumption that what was at stake was merely ethnic struggle and constitutional inclarity, both of which had escalated to warfare. In fact, the driving force behind the national emancipation drive, apart from the undoubtable constitutional pre-text, was profit and a rampant criminalisation of the political elites running the war.

The challenge arising from the Western Balkans today is similarly mundane in motivation. Failing political systems in some of the Yugoslav successor countries have led to the establishment of commercial monopolies that have fostered synergies between legitimate businesses, corrupt parts of the state apparatuses, and gangsters. Such monopolies are well known in the theories of soft insecurity, and they represent complex clientelistic relationships that are near to impossible to break, as once any one partner exits the arrangement, the remaining partners are far too vulnerable to accept the new situation and such departures are usually followed by extreme violence. The establishment of criminal controls over parts of official politics in countries such as Bulgaria ("the athlete criminals" — former national team members in various sports, notably wrestlers, turning into leaders of organised criminal rings involving politicians and businesspeople), Croatia (former state security operatives close to the underworld participating in the so-called "tycoon privatizations" of state enterprises by using fictional bank deposits against purchases of property that is immediately mortgaged), as well as in Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia, has meant that generalised contingency in David Campbell's sense lurks

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[10] Brian White, *Understanding European Foreign Policy*, Palgrave, Basingstoke, 2001, p. 152.

everywhere. In such physically and commercially unsafe environments all types of illegal trade can flourish, and their natural market is the EU. The EU preoccupied with designs of its own military grandeur has recently given way to an EU reconciled with its essential trans-Atlantic security dependency, yet the realisation of the exact direction of change of the nature of the threats seems to lag behind the development of the threats themselves. Social anomie is always the unmistakable symptom of a social decay that breeds soft security contingency, and signs of such anomie are more than obvious in the greatest part of the Western Balkans today. The new security constellation in Europe will partly be dictated by the development of soft security threats in the Western Balkans and by the level of ability of the European nations to address such threats effectively, and not necessarily antagonistically towards the aspiring new European democracies.

Most soft security issues emanating from the Western Balkans arise from what could be considered a lagging, if not failed, transition. They consist in violence in its various forms, and such violence is mostly articulated through organised criminal activity and possible threats from terrorism caused by institutional disintegration and ethnic discontent. Violence emanating from the region is conditioned by structural violence towards the region. It is not caused by structural violence in the sense of removing responsibility from the Balkan actors, but it is certainly conditioned by such structural pressures. The level of exclusion that is implemented towards the Western Balkans tends to ricochet in the level of reactive, or indigenously bred pro-active violence through soft security issues within the region.

The changed nature of the threats has meant that the entire Eastern Europe is permeated in-depth by increasingly active intelligence apparatuses. They delve not only in the structures wherein traditionally conceived national security threats might come from, but increasingly in the domestic civil society and academic communities. Such policies produce consequences in the realm of public feeling of security that make the constituents feel vulnerable and exposed. In a society where most people feel exposed to the repressive side of state authority the level of reactive violence tends to be higher than in one where the societal circumstances are calmer and firmer founded in the rule of law.

Social stratification in lagged or failed transitions also shows strong demarcation lines for a rise in generalised delinquency. Given the accepted assumption that delinquency is the recruiting base for organised crime and to some extent terrorism, societies that suffer from high levels of corruption (which is certainly the case in most Western Balkan states), including structural transformation failures such as structural corruption (corruption turned into stable clientelistic relationships that cannot be easily broken without extreme violence being applied), structural unemployment (large sections of the population that could be qualified as "unemployable" due to a lack of skills and distorted social attitudes), or structural criminalisation (deep penetration of state structures by criminal ways), present very special security challenges to the outside world.

In the American society of the 1950, the sources of criminalisation were sought in a social promotion of discontent and a general deregulation of social life that emanated from the onset of economic liberalism and fiscal and trade deregulation. In such a society failure was seen as a sign of personal, rather than social, inadequacy, and its immediate psychological outcome was individual feeling of guilt rather than the articulation of political anger.[11] Similar conditions apply in the transitional societies that have managed to internalise all the ambitions of more developed ones, without being able to implement the necessary structural and, more importantly, cultural prerequisites not just for the attainment of an effective economy and living standards, but also for the achievement of appropriate social and human security standards. Analogous to Merton's pronouncement that the cardinal American virtue − ambition − promotes the cardinal American vice − deviance, it could be said of the lagged transitional societies that their internalisation of the values towards which the transitional process strives goes hand-in-hand with the tendency to pursue such values in culturally and socially immature circumstances to the extent that a particular social implosion within such societies occurs.

From a sociological point of view, perhaps it is this account, popularly known as the "theory of illegitimate avenues to success" that can most accurately explain the immense level of violence in the Western Balkan societies that translate into delinquency, and further on into organised crime. Analyses by European intelligence agencies of the "rings" of crime owned and operated by perpetrators from the Western Balkans merely point to the tip of an iceberg, the iceberg itself consisting of a number of social and political conditions that allow violence to flourish.

The Western Balkans thus prove to be somewhat of a hidden twin brother of European societies, one whose development has been hindered by isolation and a number of other social and political factors, yet one who must now be taken out of the attic and shown to the world. The way in which this will be accomplished while fostering, rather than degrading, European security, depends on the level of realisation of the changed nature of security in Europe. Even today one hears accounts of European security that totally miss the very nature of security in the modern era.

As a result of the Yugoslav experience, much debate has gone into the assumed (or recommended?) division of labour in enforcement, peacekeeping or peace support operations between the Americans ("who shoot up the place", being responsible for the really demanding use of "muscle") and the Europeans (who move in when the shooting is over and "do the dishes" (…)). Presumably, this "doing of the dishes" also involves a European willingness to stay the long haul while the US forces move on to their next, demanding assignment.[12]

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[11] Robert Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure*, The Free Press, Glencoe, 1957, p. 145.

[12] Bo Huldt et al. (eds), loc. cit, Introduction, p. XIII.

Europeans still tend to think of international security in terms of military or peacekeeping interventions. For a majority European academics and policy-makers alike, keeping Europe safe is more less equivalent to being able to act even without the Americans in ways familiar from the former Yugoslav wars of disintegration. European security thinking has not seemed to depart sufficiently from the Yugoslav quagmire of the 1990s, and the European security mind does not seem to have opened up to what American security theorists have already long pointed to: new security will depend on the ability of the state to protect both itself and its society against aspirants to take on the role of the state who come from the ranks of organised and globalised contingency that may take the form of crime, terrorism, or merely violent discontent.

New Security Protocols to be Learned

In failed political systems, or those undergoing serious internal organisational problems, foreign partners often encounter a single dilemma: whether to support those parts of the system that seem to be revitalising despite the general systemic failure, or to withdraw support until systemic guarantees are there that assistance will not be abused and that the capacity enlargement itself will not turn into a threat. Typically such concerns apply to forms of international cooperation that involve technical or financial support, and they have been known to confuse policies aimed to increase police efficiency in countries that otherwise present regional problems.

The point can be poignantly illustrated by the example of police reform. In some postcommunist societies police structures, especially those specialised in the particular tasks of fighting organised crime and other complex security threats, have proven more capable of reform than the other government sectors. This has come as a surprise in societies where the handling of intelligence, for example, has traditionally been intransparent and subject of political abuse, and where the overarching systemic features have remained confused. Support to the police exhibits a dual face in such circumstances, because building up the capacity of the police to conduct effective intelligence-gathering, which is pre-requisite for an adequate anti-organised crime policy, may cut both ways in enabling the police to address crime more effectively, and at the same time additionally endangering human rights by increasing the overall amount of intelligence that might be abused.

The experience so far has proven that in failed systems, and they can be generally identified with insecure, high-risk environments, those parts of the government that are the most strengthened in professional terms, tend to be less prone to corruption and decay that characterise the rest of the system. If the self-appreciation of a profession is sufficient, and the ability of the professionals to do their work effectively is on an adequate level, both technically and with regard to training, that profession will be more able to resist the decay and will at least

partially complete the legitimate tasks assigned to it. At the same time, those parts of the system that lay at the farthest margins, especially if they are financially and technically impoverished, tend to develop low self-esteem that translates into a crumbling of the integrity of the profession, and are thus easy prey to generalised societal decay. In short, even in failed systems, those parts of the government and society that exhibit signs of vitality should be supported, because this will increase their ability and willingness to resist degradation, even if theoretically this might also increase some of the risks on the other ebb of the equation.

If this line of argument is correct, and it seems to be empirically supported to a significant extent, then a similar line of reasoning can be applied to the security equation in lagging regions such as that of Southeastern Europe, more precisely the Western Balkans. Although compared to other equivalent parts of the post-cold war security constellation, elsewhere in the world, such as the Russian Federation or the post-Soviet space, the Western Balkans have proven to be a chronic problem, they remain of primary European security interest because they contain the most significant security threats for Europe. One of the threats arises from the unfinished territorial separations, the most traumatic one looming in Kosovo, but although this theme dominates news headlines and high-level political debates, it is neither the only, nor structurally the most serious one. Far more serious is the threat from profound criminalisation, and such a threat arises not the least in Kosovo. Drug- and human trafficking, organised crime in the theft of cars and organised violent crimes, such as the assassinations industry, are all known to be firmly embedded in the fabric of the Kosovar society. In addition to this, the prospect of an independent Kosovo invites readily the scenarios of money laundering on a mass scale, because in a society that has grown so accustomed to crime, with an enormous tolerance to it, it is not difficult to imagine the role banks and other financial institutions might assume in assisting the drug barons and criminal rings from across Europe in turning criminal profits into seemingly legitimate capital.

While on the political level arguments to the effect that supporting the unfinished separations to unfold to the end would increase security problems arising from crime have not been successful — in fact they have been openly ignored — assuming that such processes of separation will continue, new security protocols need to be agreed on, both philosophically, in principle, and technically, in terms of specific institutional arrangements. Such protocols would call for increased pressure on the new statelets or state-like entities, including Kosovo, from an array of crime-control agencies positioned both inside such territories and in the surrounding countries, with the express aim of containing the spread of crime until institutions are sufficiently solidified to act as independent guarantors of integrity and security.

Most large criminal organisations, and terrorist groups alike, enter hibernation when faced with increased control pressure. This, however, manifests itself in different ways depending on what type of a security threat is at stake.

Terrorist groups' hibernation exhibits itself in the actual absence of activity. Such was the situation with the war on terrorism waged against al Qaeda by the United States government after 9/11. Al Qaeda's internal security protocols, while providing the top brass of the group with relative security, simultaneously acted as a strong barrier to effective action, so that, while the group's leadership has arguably survived the US onslaught on Afghanistan and the subsequent pursuit globally, since 9/11 no new assault on the American soil has been launched despite expectations and forecasts by US intelligence agencies. Maintaining pressure, it would seem, thus guarantees a relatively high level of preventative security. This does not mean that the threat is eliminated altogether, but it is contained within the area delimited by the group's own (in this case high-level) security protocols.

The fact that al-Qaeda has gone underground and has been paralysed by its security protocols does not in itself justify all facets of the US "war on terror". Much of the rhetoric, and indeed, of policymaking, in the aftermath of 9/11 has been far too emotional and aggressive. For example, Congressman Robert L. Livingston, representative of Louisiana, former Chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, and member of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, wrote in late September 2001

Future indefensible, evil and heinous acts such as these must be prevented and defended against, and the only way we can reasonably defend against them is to eliminate their perpetrators. That entails a defense not as we know it, but one far better — more comprehensive, more thorough, more intrusive and more painstaking — than what we have today. And it entails an offensive capability that is equal to anything we've mobilized in the past against known enemies, but far more lethal and effective in its ability to search out and target and destroy the hidden and cowardly enemies (…).[13]

This, however, is but one in a string of hawkish accounts of how 9/11 should be reflected in the US security policy. In the same publication series, Jack Spencer writes at the same time as Livingston:

To protect Americans against such devastation, ballistic missile defenses must be deployed as soon as possible. To do this, however, the United States must announce that it considers the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty with the Soviet Union defunct. It must also streamline the missile defense development and acquisition process, fully fund the President's missile defense program, and begin developing specific architectures for near-term deployment. (…) the United States military should expand the most flexible elements of its forces. This should include increasing the attack submarine fleet and reopening the B-2 bomber production line; it also means continuing the broad-based modernization of the fighter fleet and maintaining the current level of aircraft carriers. (…) A longer-term goal of transformation (say, for example, 10 years)

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[13] Robert L. Livingston, "National Security Priorities for the 21st Century, *Heritage Lectures*, no. 716, The Heritage Foundation, Washington, 26 September 2001, p. 1. Italics added.

should be to create a military force capable of conducting worldwide operations to attack and destroy widely distributed targets rapidly. This force should include advanced cruise missiles, unmanned combat aircraft, "space bombers", new submarines, low-visibility surface ships, directed energy weapons such as lasers and microwaves, and space control assets. (…)[14]

It should be noted that despite the title of the paper, which suggests a general military-type concept of national security and defence, Spencer, a defence and national security policy analyst for the conservative Heritage Foundation, writes about countermeasures to address the terrorist threat, assuming that terrorists might be able to acquire missiles capable of delivering warheads with chemical and biological weapons. In short, he calls for total war in cases where American security might be seen as significantly threatened. Clearly these views were not just lonely voices lingering in the aftermath of the devastation on 9/11, but have subsequently been largely translated into the policy of the conservative US administration through the wars on Afghanistan, Iraq, and the considerable loosening of restrictions on the use of intelligence and the curbing of civil liberties through increasing the discretion of the security agencies within the US and worldwide.

Such approach has not yielded the desired results, as terrorists have not been destroyed, and even al-Qaeda continues to exist and broadcast video messages from Osama bin-Laden. The pressure has put al-Qaeda in hibernation, and in this way it has increased de facto security from it, but at the same time the extreme measures have inflicted serious damage to the fabric of civil society globally, and it remains to be seen whether there will be a will to restore it, and if so, whether or not this will be wholly possible. The reaction by al-Qaeda, however, provides a positive result of the increased control pressure.

The reactions by organised criminal groups to increased pressure, however, tend to be different. An organised criminal group, normatively, is usually defined as a group of offenders who commit various crimes over a continuous period, where such crimes have an essential cross-border dimension, either by being planned in one state, and committed in another, or in being committed in more than one state, or simply in involving consequences for more than one state. The definitions are vague and inadequate, lured by the need to catch a glimpse of an entity that constantly changes its exact shape, structure and membership. Still, the working definitions all revolve around the several abovementioned elements.

Organised crime is generally focused on a more or less stable supply of a criminal market, meaning that it bears striking resemblance in its modus operandi to legitimate business. In particular some of the economic logic behind organised crime is identical to that of legitimate business. However, while legitimate business will react to market pressure by lowering the prices, cutting down on the profits and on the number of middle-men, thus reducing the

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[14] Jack Spencer, "A Defense Agenda for 21st Century Warfare", *Backgrounder no. 1476,* The Heritage Foundation, 20 September 2001, pp. 1–2.

number of actors and increasing the number of roles each actor plays, all with a view of reducing costs, organised crime usually reacts in the opposite way.

Once there is a "control-blitz" against an organised criminal operation or group, the group will tend to lower the profits by increasing the number of actors (e.g. middle-men, traffickers, recruiters, dealers, etc.), while at the same time reducing the amount of the goods carried by each of the actors (such as in the distribution of drugs). Sometimes, the organisation will conduct decoy operations, sacrificing a number of operatives while at the same time conducting larger operations in other parts of the world. Columbian drug cartels have repeatedly used the method of sending smaller amounts of drugs via curriers to European airports simultaneously with shipping large quantities to European ports. They would tip off the couriers to the police, which would generally lead to a large number of arrests and close scrutiny of the air traffic, while the ships would arrive safely in their harbors with tons of cocaine and heroin. This is a highly sophisticated response to the control effort, because it leaves the police as happy as the criminal organisation, as the arrest statistics rocket, showing increased police efficiency. In other words, the response by a criminal organisation to increased control pressure might in fact be a seemingly increased activity, with a seeming expansion of the personnel involved, and a corresponding rise in the number of arrests and "crimes solved", but such statistical outcomes often mark exactly the opposite of what might seem to be the case at first glance.

Both security threats in the Western Balkans, especially that from organised crime, require close scrutiny by the police forces of the region's countries, and by European police forces. This especially concerns Kosovo, which, if it becomes independent, will be the prime security issue for Europe in the context of organised crime. Although the Western Balkan region contains elements of failed transitions, especially in the area of institutional reform, and its culture does support practices that do not fall in line with European standards, including a customarily high degree of intransparency of governance, support to its police forces is vital as an element of European geo-strategic security policy. At the same time, although there are numerous obstacles to effective institutional cooperation between the Western Balkans and the EU when international justice and fight against corruption are at stake, because there remain unfulfilled elements of EU conditionality towards the region (cooperation with ICTY and the effective curbing of corruption in the public administration sectors), intensive cooperation with the region through police synergies is essential is the Kosovo threat is to be managed adequately.

Geostrategy has traditionally been based on relations between states, yet it has been transformed in ways that ground it in the states' management of issues that threaten security and prosperity across borders. Soft security is the pre-eminent issue for the geostrategy of security policy in Europe today, and Kosovo is at least one of its focal points. The long-ignored soft-security dimension of the Kosovo issue will re-assert itself with vigour once the political status is resolved, and if until then appropriate measures have not been prepared to immediately counter the

sudden rise in the threat from organised crime, and possibly terrorism, hefty price will be paid in the amount of European security sacrificed.

Cooperation between the European countries, Russia and the US should overcome the stumbling blocks encountered during the status talks, and should move into less politically controversial, yet security-wise highly pressing, concerns. There seem to be no significant divisions between the three partners in assessing the danger from organised crime and a generalised threat to soft security emanating from Kosovo. Thus, it would seem natural to foster clear, quick and effective synergies in establishing control agencies close to Kosovo, and in invigorating the control services of all the Western Balkans countries to deal with the threat that, emanating from Kosovo, would lead precisely across these territories towards the EU. While cooperation within Europol and with Europol has improved steadily (Europol maintains high interest in Kosovo as a breeding ground of organised crime), the moves taken so far remain greatly insufficient for the amount of the threat to be expected once the status process is brought to a conclusion. More bilateralism needs to be included so that dynamism might be breathed into the process of building security policy for the post-status period. Concrete officer-to-officer, agency-to-agency cooperation needs to start without delay, with significant investment in the Western Balkans security infrastructure and with a relocation of major crime control agencies positions to the region. In the Balkan EU members, Europol points of contact should be established and constantly reinforced, to act as staging areas for any operations against crime in Kosovo and from Kosovo, while the rest of the region that is not yet within the EU should be factually included in the concerted security policy. While in such a way the new geo-strategic equation in Europe, which is no longer based on state-to-state relations, but rather on an all-to-problem approach, will not structurally change, its inner tension will be reduced. Organised crime emanating from this part of the Western Balkans will react in the various ways it has been known to adopt when responding to control pressure. Sometimes there will seem to be a proliferation of criminal activity and policing success. However, the threat that will arise from a political independence, if it eventuates, will be structurally deeply imbedded in the Kosovar society, thus difficult to erase, and certainly nothing to be underestimated or to be treated as a problem that will go away after anything less than a long-term, full-capacity endeavour by all European security structures.