DOCUMENTI
IAI

SUCCESS AND FAILURES OF INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE POST-YUGOSLAV CRISIS

by Maurizio Cremasco

Paper presented at the Conference
"Security in Europe after the Cold War: what role for international institutions?"
Rome 10-11 December 1993

IAI9333

ISTITUTO AFFARI INTERNAZIONALI

SUCCESS AND FAILURES OF INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE POST-YUGOSLAV CRISIS

by Maurizio Cremasco

1. INTRODUCTION

Until the second half of the 80s, European stability and the maintenance of an acceptable level of security was mainly seen as the result of the effective functioning of three different institutional structures: NATO, the Warsaw Pact and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). NATO and the Warsaw Pact provided a fairly balanced defense posture. The result was a regional stalemate under the nuclear umbrella of the two superpowers. At least theoretically, the CSCE offered a larger number of countries a forum and a frame of reference for security, no matter how uncertain its true capacity may actually have been.

In less than five years, the European strategic landscape was drastically changed by the revolutionary events in the East. For a brief period, European security appeared assured by the mere emergence of a "new world order", and the multinational istitutions -- some to be revised and some to be strengthened -- were seen as building blocks that would eventually form a single construction. It was fashionable to discuss "European security architectures" and "concentric circles of security". Another institution, the North Atlantic Cooperation Council, closely linked to NATO, was created to address the security concerns of the Central-Eastern European countries and the former Soviet republics. By approving the Maastricht treaty, the European Community (EU) inserted its quest for a European security and defense identity into the overall picture and assigned new functions to the Western European Union (WEU).

However, the emergence of strong nationalistic sentiments and deep ethnic rivalries, the multiplication of trouble spots in the East, and the Yugoslav crisis rapidly dashed the hopes of a period of international stability, and a general move toward democracy and market economy. And it dispelled the prospect of a perfect structure capable of addressing Europe's post-Cold War and post-Communist security requirements while providing the stability framework needed for its peaceful political evolution and economic development.

In the Gulf crisis, the international institutions mainly supported the strong leadership role played by the United States. The United Nations (UN) legitimated the actions of the anti-Saddam coalition, while NATO agreed on the deployment of US troops and armaments to Saudi Arabia and offered its well- tested logistic support system. But it would be difficult to deny that without the leadership and participation of the United States there would have been no coalition, no war against Iraq and no victory.

In the Yugoslav crisis, no international or European organization or single country assumed a decisive role in the management process, though they were all involved in it at different stages and to different degrees.

Basically, the purpose of this brief paper is to try to respond to the following questions: How have the international institutions reacted to and performed in the course of the Yugoslav crisis? What are their main accomplishments and their most evident failures? To what extent have these failures been the result of institutional shortcomings or, vice versa, to what extent can they be attributed to other factors? How well, and in what cases, have different institutions co-operated and worked together? Has there been competition, duplication of efforts, overlapping of responsibilities, and conflicts among the international institutions? What lessons may be learned from the crisis? What can be done to put the institutions into a better position to confront future

crises?

2. THE CONFERENCE ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE.

In June 1991, when the last act of the Yugoslav drama began to unfold, the CSCE was ill-prepared to play its institutional role. For the first time, it had to confront a crisis involving one of its members. As an internal crisis, it was particularly difficult to manage because of the fine line separating the international search for a diplomatic solution -- and the definition of the purpose and latitude of international action -- from a policy of interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign state. The task was made even more difficult by the explosive mix of the prevailing ethnic and nationalistic factors, economic failure, social unrest and political de-legitimation of the communist regime. Moreover, because of the unanimity required for adopting resolutions, it was easy for Yugoslavia, prior to its suspension,[1] to veto any action it considered against its interests. In the early phases of the crisis, the job of the CSCE was further complicated by the opposition of the Soviet Union to a CSCE peacekeeping role. Finally, the CSCE mechanisms created to deal with events like the Yugoslav crisis (the emergency mechanism,[2] the Moscow mechanism,[3] the Conflict Prevention Center(CPC)[4] and the High Commissioner on National Minorities[5]) were either still too "young"[6] to be able to work effectively or adopted when the crisis had become too complicated to be managed with their weak diplomatic instruments.

The CSCE Ministerial Council, meeting in Berlin on June 20, was able only to express concern about the crisis and support "for the democratic development, unity and territorial integrity of Yugoslavia". When Austria notified its concern about "unsual military activity" close to its borders, and triggered the reunion of the CPC, and the first emergency meeting of the CSCE council (held in Prague on July 3-5, 1991), agreement was reached on only two points: to appeal the parties to halt the conflict and to send a mission of "good offices" and an EC-arranged observer mission to monitor the cease-fire.[7]

From July 1991, the CSCE adopted a low-profile policy toward the Yugoslav crisis, letting the EC to confront the situation and carry the whole diplomatic burden of the pacification efforts.

However, it was not totally inactive. The CSCE provided the European forum in which regional countries, in particular those bordering Yugoslavia, could channel their concern and discuss possible crisis management measures. It gave the EC a place to present and explain the Community actions on the crisis. The CSCE Commettee of Senior Officials (CSO) offered the EC involvement in the crisis a broad legitimation framework by its explicit support. In August 1991, the CSCE managed to convince Yugoslavia to accept an enlargement of the EC monitor

---

[1]. The CSCS suspended Yugoslavia for three months on July 8, 1992 and indefinitely on August 7.

[2]. A mechanism for consultation and cooperation in emergencies was approved during the Berlin's CSCE Council of June 1991. Any CSCE State affected or threatened by a dispute may call a crisis meeting of the CSCE Council if supported by 12 other States. The Arms Control Reporter, idds, 7-91, p. 402.B.280.11.

[3]. The mechanism allows for the deployment of CSCE monitors and observers in countries that do not respect the commitments taken under the Helsinki Treaty concerning human rights. The mechanism was adopted in September 1991.

[4]. The creation of the Conflict Prevention Center was decided during the CSCE summit in November 1990. The Center is located in Vienna.

[5]. One of the main responsibilities of The High Commissioner on National Minorities is that of alerting the Committee of Senior Officials on increasing tensions in multi-ethnic CSCE countries. It was created in July 1992, but became operational only after 5 months.

[6]. The emergency mechanism was approved on June 20 and applied for the first time, after less than two weeks, on July 3 with the emergency meeting of the CSCE Council. The CPC could not fully activate the Procedures for the Peacefulk Settlement of Disputes because the foreseen Register of Mediators had not yet been established.

[7]. For Yugoslavia it was sufficient to answer Austria's request within the framework of the CPC to fulfill its obligations, while the CSCE "good offices" mission was refused by Belgrade and never took place.

mission to include observers from Canada, Czechoslovakia, Poland and Sweden. In December 1991, it launched a fact-finding mission on human rights which visited all the Yugoslav republics and the province of Kosovo. In August 1992, it decided to establish long-term missions in Kosovo, Sandjak and Vojvodina.[8] Finally, it conducted sanctions assistance missions (SAM) in coordination with the EC and "spill-over" missions in Macedonia to prevent the enlargement of the conflict to that Republic.

However, it can be argued that the CSCE's impact on the crisis was minimal. As previously said, it was difficult to reach an agreement among 52 members, some of them with close historical relations with Yugoslavia.[9] Moreover, when Belgrade vetoed a CSCE peace conference, the latter was forced out of a direct management role. Finally, the fact that all the short and long-term missions had to be approved by Yugoslavia represented a strong limiting factor.

In fact, a more effective CSCE role in crisis management can only derive from some structural reforms and a strengthening of its operational capabilities.

3. THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

The EC was ill-prepared to confront the crisis, even though it had developed over the course of several years, its military outcome (the civil war between Croatia and Serbia) was largely predictable, and Yugoslavia's fate is geostrategically and geopolitically important for European security.

First, while the Yugoslav crisis was progressing toward its violent climax, the EC was concentrating its attention and concern on three events directly and indirectly affecting European security: the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact; the process of German re-unification since November 1989; and the Gulf crisis and the coalition war against Iraq from August 1990 to January 1991.

Second, many EC countries strongly favored the maintenance of a unified Yugoslavia initially. They felt that the breakdown of the Yugoslav federation would establish a dangerous precedent -- a feeling shared by other European countries, the Soviet Union included. This attitude, which shaped EC diplomacy until it was overtaken by the events, in fact underestimated the force of national and ethnic factors and overestimated the cohesive political effect of economic recovery, however slow.

Third, the EC -- like all other international institutions -- was confronted with the difficult problem of bringing peace to a country which had collapsed from within. People in Yugoslavia did not want to remain part of the same state and, for ethnic reasons, they had no intention of continuing to be part of the same republic. In other words, the EC was confronted with the difficult problem of defending a country from itself.

The EC did not seriously address the Yugoslav situation before the Croatian and Slovenian declarations of independence on June 25, 1991. From that moment until the Summer of 1992, the EC was on the forefront of the crisis management and engaged all its mediation skills. It mediated an agreement which served to defuse the situation in Slovenia (Brioni, 7 July 1991). It organized a peace conference (The Hague, 7 September 1991), offered a comprehensive institutional plan for the reconstitution of Yugoslavia (18 October 1991) and sent observer teams to monitor the cease-fires which were brokered by the EC mediator, Lord Carrington, between Serbia and

---

[8]. The mission was supposed to promote dialogue, collect information on all aspects relevant to human rights violations, establish contact points for solving problems and assist in providing information on legislation concerning protection of minorities, freedom of the press and democratic elections. See the decisions of the CSCE's CSO in Review of International Affairs, n. 1007-1008, 1.VIII-1.IX 1992, pp. 24-26.

[9]. At the end of July 1992 summit, the participants nearly failed to agree even on a bland statement condemning the violence in Yugoslavia. Marc Fisher and Don Oberdofer, "U.S. to Join Europeans in Patrol Off Yugoslavia", International Herald Tribune (IHT), 11-12 July 1992, p. 4.

Croatia. Serbia's rejection of the EC plan refocused the attention on the U.N., which had begun its direct involvement by appointing the former U.S. Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance, as its special envoy on October 8. The EC had already appealed to the UN in August 1991, and this was seen by many commentators as the symbol of Europe's failure in the management of the crisis.[10] In early November, Serbia caught everybody by surprise by asking the Security Council to send a UN peacekeeping force to Yugoslavia. By mid November, Croatia also asked for UN intervention and by the end of the month Cyrus Vance announced that through his mediation an agreement was reached in Geneva between President Tudjman, President Milosevic, and the federal Minister of Defense, General Kadijevic, for a cease-fire (the fourteenth)[11] and the acceptance of a "blue helmet" contingent as an interposition force. From that moment, the role played by the EC, excluding the issue of recognition, was limited to finding a political settlement through the continuation of the peace conference, while the U.N. efforts concentrated on peacekeeping.

The Hague conference was reconvened on December 9, after a break of more than a month. But little was expected to come out of the talks, and the EC officials themselves described the new session as a stock-taking exercise.[12]

In April 1992, the war spilled over to Bosnia-Herzegovina. The sporadic ethnic clashes, which had began in August 1991,[13] intensified immediately after the referendum in which 63.4 percent of Bosnia-Herzegovina's electorate voted overwhelmingly for secession (99.43 percent in favor).[14] By summer 1992, the fighting assumed the features of a blatant war of aggression of Serbia against the new republic. By May 1992, the conference had become a diplomatic exercise that even some EC officials regarded as useless.[15] In June, the attempt to revive the EC sponsored peace process ended in total failure, prompting Lord Carrington to declare that the results "had been disheartening".[16] In July, the same outcome emerged from the talks held in London where a new cease-fire (the 39th!) was signed, and almost immediately violated. In August, the EC's attempt to revive the negotiations was boycotted by the Presidents of Serbia and Montenegro. Finally, on the eve of the EC/U.N. London international conference on Yugoslavia on August 26, Lord Carrington announced his resignation, a decision which appeared to be a sign of personal frustration, and an explicit demonstration of distrust of the capability of world diplomacy to solve the crisis. By August 1992, the EC role had become secondary to and supportive of the UN action, and somewhat marginal with respect to the evolution of the Yugoslav drama.

The peace conference was a honest effort to gather the major actors of the crisis around a negotiating table and to try to broker a solution through a flurry of diplomatic activity conducted by the President of the EC Council and Lord Carrington, the chairman of the conference. As noted by Michael Brenner, "they stressed their mandate to the limit in pressing the Yugoslav combatants with a mix of persuasion, cajolery and threat".[17]

On the other hand, the conference -- convened, suspended, re-convened several times -- proved to be a failure. It could be argued that insisting on the conference as the only true element of the EC policy when it was clear that it was leading nowhere was bound to tarnish the EC image,

---

[10]. For the most representative interpretation of the EC decision as reported in the Italian press, see Franco Venturini, "I Dodici in Serie B", Corriere della Sera (CS), 7 August 1991, p. 1.

[11]. Actually, the November 24 truce was violated daily by both sides. There was only a lull in the fighting. Sporadic shelling and battles took place the day after the cease-fire was signed, and by the end of the month widespread fighting flared again on the whole front.

[12]. IHT, 10 December 1991, p. 2.

[13]. Europe, n. 5553, 26-27 August 1991, p. 4.

[14]. IHT, 4 March 1992, p. 6.

[15]. A diplomat close to the conference declared after the 12th session held in Brussels on May 6: "It is stuck. It had stopped making headway". IHT, 7 May 1992, p. 2. Lord Carrington himself depicted a bleak picture of the conference declaring that none of its goals had so far been attained. Pietro Sormani, "Insabbiata a Bruxelles la conferenza di pace", CS, 7 May 1992, p. 11.

[16]. IHT, 26 June 1992, p. 2. Europe, n. 5761, 28-29 June 1992, p. 4.

[17]. Michael Brenner, "The EC in Yugoslavia: A Debut Performance", Strategic Studies, January 1992, p.14.

send wrong signals about the commitments made in Maastricht, and eliminate any further prospect of playing a significant role in shaping the new security arrangements in a post-Cold War Europe.

It could also be argued that there was little sense for the EC to persist in a brokerage role without being willing and able to make timely use of all potential political, economic and military leverage.

As for the use of military force, there were many good reasons for the WEU and the EC to shun the decision to deploy ground troops in a highly volatile and risky military situation with the task of not just keeping, but enforcing peace. Yet, it could be argued that the EC unwillingness to apply a limited and calculated amount of military force to give true substance to its formal admonitions and threats eventually had adverse effects on its overall diplomatic effort -- apart from the fact that it revealed an EC incapable of managing the first real crisis on its door-steps in post-Cold War Europe.

This does not mean that the EC should necessarily have sent a ground troop contingent to Yugoslavia, but it means that more serious thinking should have been given to the selective use of air and sea power. The initial phase of the crisis, at the end of 1991, at the time of the siege and shelling of Dubrovnik,[18] which the EC considered "an illegal act clearly aimed at the seizure of an indisputably Croatian city",[19] was the right moment to use military force as an instrument of political pressure. The air and naval forces of the major European states were fully capable of performing the three tasks needed to send a strong signal mainly to Belgrade, but also to Zagreb: first, keeping the federal aircraft on the ground -- by offensive combat air patrol (CAP) missions conducted in Yugoslav air space and eventually counterair missions against selected airbases; second, total sea control of the Adriatic; third, interdiction with surgical strikes of the main assets of Serbian superiority, i.e. tanks and heavy artillery, together with their vulnerable logistic tail.[20] The eventuality of U.S. air and naval forces participating in the operations would have represented powerful support and given an even clearer and stronger signal.

This course of action -- militarily minimal, high-tech, low-casualty, internally approved and wrapped in a peace plan[21] -- could have achieved three goals: to reduce the military capabilities of the federal armed forces; to alter Serbian calculations of costs and benefits of EC peace proposals; to indicate the EC's willingness of going beyond words, thus strengthening its crisis-management effort.

Obviously, the potential political and military risks and repercussions of such an operation were not to be underestimated and each part should have been planned considering all the possible contingencies and flawlessly executed. Even such a military intervention would probably not have solved the situation immediately. It was unlikely, though possible, that the punishment inflicted on the aggressors could stop the fighting. Moreover, it can not be excluded that the EC would have been forced to contemplate even harsher actions such as the bombing of key strategic assets in Serbia itself, thus opening a totally new phase of the conflict. However, apart from the above mentioned goals, the intervention would have dispelled all the allusions about a European double standard, the image of an EC relegated to the role of a bystander, and the impression that it still intended its security in a very narrow sense - three elements which were bound to have long-lasting effects within and outside the Community. But a different EC was needed, even for a limited military option: more politically mature, less internally divided and more determined about

---

[18]. Dubrovnik is a city on the UNESCO World Heritage List (i.e. its monuments had been declared of "universal value", and their safekeeping "the responsibility of mankind").

[19]. EC declaration. IHT, 28 October 1991, p. 2.

[20]. This type of assessment has also been conducted by other strategic analysts, experts and journalists and applied not only to the Croatian, but also to the Bosnian case. In particular, see Philip Zelikov, "The New Concert of Europe", Survival, vol. 34, n. 2, IISS, London, Summer 1992, pp. 12-30. Brian Beedham, "Europe and America Could Interdict Serbia's Arms", IHT, 18 May 1992, p. 4, and Antony Lewis, "What Was That About a New World Order?", ibid.

[21]. This definition was given by Stephen S. Rosenfeld, "Moving to Intervention In Yugoslavia", The Washinton Post (WP), 22 May 1992, A39.

its international role.

The EC was late and divided even on the use of the economic leverage at its disposal and nothing significant was done over the first four critical months of the crisis. In July 1991, the EC decided only to freeze its economic aid (807 million ECU) to Yugoslavia. In August, the possibility of imposing economic sanctions was considered, but rejected at the emergency meeting of the EC ministerial Council at The Hague. During their meeting in the Netherlands in early October, the EC Ministers were still considering trade sanctions and an oil embargo as measures to be taken later if the conflict continued -- a good example of the very slow pace of EC diplomacy and also a sign of lack of appreciation of the seriousness of the crisis.[22] Only by early November, did the EC decide to adopt a series of restrictive economic measures,[23] later applied only to Serbia and Montenegro,[24] though insufficient to be an instrument of pressure capable of opening new diplomatic prospects.[25]

Throughout 1992, the Community gave the impression of being very reluctant to isolate or punish Serbia. Even the French eight-point plan presented at the EC meeting in Portugal in early May seemed detached from the real situation in Bosnia.[26]

Only on May 11, did the EC finally decide to recall all of its ambassadors from Belgrade (it was the least threatening move to take), while postponing any decision on the eventuality of much talked-about tighter economic sanctions.

By late May, the set of sanctions proposed by the EC commission was still seen as a draft to be thoroughly discussed. The EC was still attached to the principles of "progressive sanctions", hoping they would change Serbia's behaviour.[27]

On May 27, the EC Permanent Representatives decided on a two-stage sanctions package, with an oil embargo delayed until the second stage.[28] Since the measures were taken just three days after the Lisbon summit where the Europeans were openly criticized and admonished by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker for acting too slowly there were speculations that the EC had acted more as a result of U.S. diplomatic pressures and the intention to act before the U.N. than of its own convictions.

The sanctions were officially approved by the EC Council on June 1, and expanded to cover the oil embargo, which had been included in the package approved by the U.N. Security

---

[22]. The threat of economic sanctions was formalized at the meeting of the EC Foreign Ministers in Haarzuilens, near Utrecht on October 6. At the meeting, the Spanish Foreign Minister, Francisco Fernàndez Ordóñez, interpreting the basic European position, said: "We must make them realize that if they do not respect a cease-fire, the EC will take action". A very odd declaration, considering that the war had been raging since June, several cease-fires had already been broken (including that agreed upon on October 4 in the framework of The Hague conference), and there were no prospects of Serbian and Croatian willingness to compromise. See IHT, 7 October 1991, p. 1, and Europe, n. 5583, 7/8 October 1991, p. 5.

[23]. On the EC declaration on Yugoslavia, and the details of the restrictive economic measures, see Europe, n. 5606, 9 November 1991, p. 3, and Europe, n. 5607, 12-13 November 1991, p. 5. See also: Michael Evans, "EC imposes sanctions on Yugoslavia", The Times, 9 November 1991, p. 20; Pietro Sormani, "I Dodici puniscono la Yugoslavia", CS, 9 November 1991, p. 3; David Usborne, "EC starts sanctions against Yugoslavia", The Independent, 9 November 1991, p. 12; LM, 9 November 1991, p. 3. Alan Riding, "EC Imposes Sanctions on Yugoslavia", IHT, 9-10 November 1991, p. 1.

[24]. The decision to make a distinction among the Yugoslav republics on the basis of their readiness to cooperate for a diplomatic solution of the crisis was taken by the EC Council in Brussels on December 2, 1991. It was not an easy decision and there were conflicts among the Twelve culminating with the abstention of Greece. Europe, n. 5621, 2-3 December 1991, p. 6.

[25]. In fact, the economic measures were limited to: the suspension of a 1980 trade and cooperation agreement; limits on imports of Yugoslavian textiles; elimination of Yugoslavia from the benefits under the General System of Preferences; and the exclusion from the PHARE program.

[26]. On the French plan, Europe, n. 5722, 4-5 May 1992, p. 5.

[27]. Europe, n. 5737, 25-26 May 1992, p. 4.

[28]. Alan Riding, "Europeans Impose a Partial Embargo on Belgrade Trade", The New York Times (NYT), 28 May 1992, A1.

Council on May 30 with Resolution 757.[29]

On August 17, the EC, while stressing the need for urgent steps to tighten the trade embargo against the new Yugoslav republic, agreed to postpone any decision on what was really needed to reach that goal -- another clear example of the slow pace of European diplomacy, in fact bordering on political impotence.

Only at the end of April 1993, did the EC again discuss economic sanctions -- Germany was isolated among the Twelve in a more intransigent position -- and did decide on a plan to enforce the new measures adopted by the U.N. SC with Resolution 820.[30]

The divisions among the Twelve, and the resultant lack of a common policy, determined the slow pace of EC diplomacy and the ineffectiveness of the measures taken to stop the war. The EC's tendency was to prove its cohesion by avoiding the tougher problems and postponing their possible solutions. Divisions emerged about the following:

- the issue of recognition of the republics of the former Yugoslavia (Slovenia and Croatia, first and Macedonia later);
- the imposition of economic sanctions with diverging views about the nature and the range of measures to be adopted and the mode and the time of their application;
- the measures to be taken to tighten the trade embargo, Greece being charged with tolerating flagrant violations of trade sanctions;
- the proposal for an international conference on Yugoslavia advanced by France and initially rejected by Britain;
- the resettlement of the refugees, with Germany asking for EC help because it felt it was supporting an unfair burden;[31]
- the delivery of humanitarian aid and the protection of relief convoys, with differences about the troops needed and the possibility to use force;
- the issues of an interposition force and an armed intervention which would go beyond military support for humanitarian aid;
- the command, control and communication arramgements for the NATO and WEU naval and air forces responsible to enforce the embargo and the "no-fly" zone;
- the possibility of using NATO air power to defend the "safe areas" designated by the U.N. Security Council;
- the U.S. proposal of ending the arms embargo on Bosnian government forces.

Finally, the prospect of a common foreign and security policy (CFSP) was shattered when on May 22, 1993 France, Spain and the United Kingdon agreed with Russia and the United States on a "Joint Action Statement", a program aimed at stopping the war in Bosnia. In fact, this decision was taken without any previous consultation within the EC framework.[32]

EC effectiveness was further impaired by political and economic events, which tended to concentrate its members' attention on domestic policies -- in particular the collapse of the European Monetary System, and the serious social repercussions of the critical economic situation in all European countries.

There were contradictory elements in the EC position, which weakened its political

---

[29]. For the text of the Resolution 757, see La Comunità Internazionale, Vol. XLVII, 1-2, 1992, pp. 20-26.

[30]. Andrea Bonanni, "La CEE discute di sanzioni e di intervento", CS, 26 Aprile 1993, p. 7.

[31]. Germany had taken 275,000 refugees, while Britain and France had taken around 1,100 each. See The Economist, 1 August 1992, p. 11 and IHT, 14 September 1992, p. 1.

[32]. The Washington agreement raised criticism among the other EC and NATO partners. The Italian Minister of Defense, Fabio Fabbri stated: "I expressed the Italian disappointment, shared by other countries, not on the substance of the agreement but on the method which was followed". Andrea Bonanni, "E l'Italia protesta: sul piano di pace non siamo stati consultati", CS, 26 maggio 1993, p. 9. Criticism and concern was voice also by Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands and Turkey. NATO DPC discussed, but did not approve the new action plan for Bosnia, declaring that it was the U.N. responsibility to clearly define any new initiative. Atlantic News (AN), n. 2528, 27 May 1993, p. 1.

credibility and its role as a true peacemaker in the crisis.

On the one hand, the EC was continually and forcefully restating its eagerness and readiness to play a role in the management of the crisis, in close coordination with the CSCE and the U.N.. On the other hand, there was a clear dicothomy between the EC official declarations and its concrete actions.[33] In early June 1993, the EC foreign ministers meeting in Luxembourg stressed that the Vance-Owen plan remained the building block of EC policy. In less than two weeks, the EC had to face the agreement between Serbia and Croatia on the partition of Bosnia into three ethnic states, which practically buried the Vance-Owen plan. During the Council meeting in Copenhagen on June 21-22, the EC ministers expressed their support for the efforts conducted by the EC and UN mediators to be based "on the principles of the London Conference, as referred to in the Vance-Owen plan". The diplomatic wording was a clear signal that the EC was willing to forgo the plan, basically accepting the reality of the situation on the ground, following the military operations and ethnic cleansing.[34] The dicotomy emerged more clearly when the EC (at the same Copenhagen meeting) agreed to accept the UN request for more troops, a commitment restated at the G-7 summit in Tokio.[35] Actually, by the end of August France was the only EC member that committed 800 more soldiers to the U.N. force.

It would be easy to say -- but it would not be fair -- that Europe has done all it could to stop the civil war in Yugoslavia. And it would be easy to say -- but it would not be fair -- that Europe has done very little, or nothing at all. The impression is that Europe was deeply divided and always late in acting -- even on those measures which did not involve direct military intervention. Not having intervened in the earliest phase of the crisis when there was at least a small chance for results (if adequate action had been taken to show Europe's determination), the European countries did not find the way to do so later. It could be argued that a show of force when it still had political and military meaning and was operationally easier might have stopped the war and prevented it from expanding to Bosnia. As the crisis progressed, becoming even more complex and difficult, the possibilities of low-cost interventions decreased together with the weakening of the European capacity to shape a Common Foreign and Security Policy.

Europe continued to adopt the best of bad alternatives -- endless diplomatic effort, full support for the delivery of humanitarian aid, tightened sanctions -- hoping that a negotiated settlement would eventually emerge.

Unfortunately, this was not the case in the Yugoslav crisis and the EC was not capable of playing an effective and decisive role. True, this role was not played by any other country or international organization. But Yugoslavia was on Europe's doorstep and after so much talk about Europe finally becoming an actor to be reckoned with on the international scene, its performance did not meet expectations.

4. THE UNITED NATIONS

In the first months of the Yugoslav crisis the U.N. adopted a policy of low profile. The crisis was considered an internal affair of Yugoslavia, thus outside of U.N. responsibility -- a position which was shared by the United States.[36]

---

[33]. On the issue of a mainly declaratory EC policy, see William Pfaff, "Europe's Futility in Bosnia Is an Ominous Symptom", IHT, 13 May 1993, p. 4.

[34]. The reality that the EC had never really wanted to seriously addressed and confronted had become a "fact of life". "We do not like it, but there is nothing we can do about it" in the word of EC mediator David Owen. Riccardo Ovizio, "In cantiere un compromesso sulla Bosnia", CS, 22 June 1993, p. 12.

[35]. See the text of the political declaration in Agenzia Ansa, "G-7. Il vertice di Tokio", Ansa Instant Book, 1993, pp. 149-151.

[36]. The U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., Thomas Pickering, declared that the U.N. had no role in Yugoslavia unless the EC and the CSCE efforts failed. Washington Post (WP), 4 July 1991, p. 19.

As previously said, the U.N. decided to become interested in October 1991, gradually assuming the main role in the crisis management, though the EC concurred by co-sponsoring the London and Geneva peace conferences in the effort to reach a political solution.

On November 23, 1991, in the first show of direct U.N. involvement, the U.N. envoy, Cyrus Vance, negotiated a ceasefire and offered a compromise plan for the deployment of U.N. troops. The plan was eventually accepted by Croatia and Serbia on January 1992, opening the way for sending some 12,000-13,000 peacekeepers in Croatia. The deployment was endorsed by the Security Council on February 14 with Resolution 743, which established the principles and the rules for the UNPROFOR, but the full deployment was authorized only almost one month later (Resolution 749) and the "Blue Helmets" assumed operational responsibilities in Sector East by May 15 and in Sector West by June 20.[37]

On the other hand, even though the Bosnia-Herzegovina's president, Alija Izetbegovic, insisted on a U.N. preventive deployment in its republic, Vance did not give any follow up to his request, while U.N. Secretary General, Boutros-Ghali, in his report to the Security Council on January 5, 1992, stated that "for the moment" there were no reasons to change the original concept envisaging the deployment in Bosnia of U.N. observers only, and only in the regions bordering Croatia.[38] Thus, a golden opportunity was lost to try to prevent the violent breakdown of the republic that, at that time, was largely anticipated.

In 1992, the U.N added to its institutional responsibility for the deployment of peacekeepers -- in September the Security Council approved the expansion of the UNPROFOR by up to 6,000 troops -- the full range of crisis management instruments, co-sponsoring with the EC first the London and then the Geneva peace-conference and adopting a series of crucial resolutions: - the imposition of progressively stiffer economic sanctions and the decision on a tight embargo to be enforced in the Adriatic Sea and the Danube river;
- the establishment of a ban on military flights (the "no-fly" zone) over Bosnia to be eventually enforced by NATO aircraft;
- the creation of a war crimes commission;
- the authorization to adopt "all measures necessary" to ensure the delivery of humanitarian aid;
- the decision on the preventive deployment in Macedonia of 700 U.N. troops and an additional 100-plus observers, police personnel and staff;
- the establishment of six "safe areas" (Bihac, Goradze, Sarajevo, Srebrenica, Tuzla and Zepa) to be protected by the UNPROFOR, eventually supported by NATO fighter-bombers.

However, not even the broad-ranging action policy of the U.N. stopped the war in Bosnia, while the diplomatic effort conducted in Geneva by the Thorvald Stoltenberg in coordination with his EC collegue David Owen was stalled by the impossibility of finding a solution acceptable to all parties.

Though the United Nations had assumed the conduct of the diplomatic and military game on the Yugoslav chessboard more than the EC, the military role of the EC countries, which were providing the bulk of the U.N. troops, and the air and naval units enforcing the U.N. resolutions was still fundamental and expected to become crucial for the enforcement of a peace agreement.

5. THE WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION

On November 18, 1991, the same day the city of Vukovar fell to the Serbs, the WEU Council agreed to commit naval forces to protect Red Cross missions rescuing wounded, women

[37]. James B. Steinberg, "The Role of European Institutions in Security after the Cold War: Some Lessons from Yugoslavia", Rand Note N-3445FF, May 1992, p. 18.
[38]. Henry Wynaendts, "L'Engranage. Chroniques Yougoslaves, Juillet 1991-Août 1992", Edition Denoël, Paris, 1993, p. 141.

and children from Dubrovnik. In other words, the WEU offered to provide warships for the establishment of a "humanitarian corridor" across the Adriatic. It was stressed that it was not a question of military action but only one of participation in humanitarian measures.[39] One could argue that the WEU action was not much considering that negotiations with Croatian and Serbian leaders were considered necessary to establish the form that the naval assistance should take. This, together with the fact that the assistance was "offered", made the WEU decision appear anything but a bold action to impose a humanitarian act on a reluctant Serbia. The European attitude appears less appeasing, however, if one considers that the WEU had threatened retaliation against the Yugoslav navy in case of any attempt at interference with the humaniarian operations.[40]

On June 19, 1992, at the Council meeting in Petersberg, the WEU was directed to examine and recommend measures to help enforce the U.N. embargo against Serbia. On June 26, at the end of a meeting of its representatives in London, the WEU expressed its intention of studying the feasibility of deploying naval units in the Adriatic. Finally, on July 10, in Helsinki the WEU announced that it would send naval and air forces to the Adriatic to monitor respect of the U.N. embargo. On the same day, NATO took an identical initiative. The "OTRANTO" operation was organized, coordinated and directed by Italy.[41] The WEU warships were to patrol the Otranto Channel, while the NATO naval force was to conduct monitoring operations in the Southern Adriatic, opposite the Montenegro coast.

In this context, some considerations seem pertinent.

(i) It took more than one month after the U.N. imposed its sanctions for the WEU to make its decision. Too long if one considers the importance of the trade embargo as a diplomatic tool to pressure Serbia into serious negotiations. Furthermore, such an operation should have been studied and planned by the WEU military staff long before sanctions were even considered, and it should have been ready to be implemented at once.

(ii) The operation was the first true European initiative in the field of defense, and the first in which WEU ships were under a single command -- a totally different situation from that of the embargo enforced against Iraq, and the humaniarian relief operations conducted from Dubrovnik by French, British and Italian ships.[42]

(iii) It is significant that for the first time NATO and WEU forces were able to operate with a single mission and in the same area (altough divided into two main zones), but under two different command authorities. The experience gained in the coordination of the two naval forces is bound to be precious for future common intervention. However, the double command setting can be appropriately adopted only in a peacetime enivronment. In case of hostilities, it would be operationally unacceptable.[43]

(iv) The limits imposed on the monitoring mission i.e. to determine whether cargo banned by the U.N. embargo was still arriving in Montenegro and Serbia (without the authority to stop and search ships, relying only on interrogations of the cargo commanders via radio) were evidently inconsistent with the aim of true control. Thus, the operation ended by appearing not as a naval blockade, but just as a diplomatic gesture with little impact on potential embargo breaches.

(v) The eventual addition of a German destroyer to the NATO maritime force and three

---

[39]. IHT, 19 November 1991, p. 2.

[40]. This was revealed by the Danish Foreign Minister, Ugge Elleman-Jensen, in an interview published by Politiken. See Europe, n. 5650, 20-21 January 1991, p. 3.

[41]. The "Otranto" operation became "Maritime Guard" and then "Sharp Guard" on June 15, 1993. NA, n. 2536, 18 June 1993, p. 1.

[42]. Europe, n. 5650, 20-21 January 1992, p. 3.

[43]. On the confusion possibly arising from this setting, see The Economist, 15 August 1992, p. 20. All the WEU countries, with the exception of France, considered a single command operationally preferable, but at the same time wanted to give the WEU the right "political visibility" for peace operations in Bosnia. The divergences on the command were solved after a joint meeting of the Atlantic Council and the WEU Council on June 8. The two fleets were put under the operational control of Commander Allied Forces Southern Europe, Italian Admiral Carlo Alberto Vandini, directly under Cincouth. Europe, n. 5996, 9 June 1993, 4.

Maritime Air Patrol (MAP) aircraft to the WEU force constituted an important change in Germany's attitude toward the participation of its armed forces in military operations connected with peacekeeping operations outside NATO's area of responsibility. For the first time, Germany accepted the principle that German troops could participate in peacekeeping missions under U.N. authority, even though serious constitutional and political problems had yet to be solved.

Finally, responding to a Security Council resolution calling for a naval blockade, first NATO on November 18 and then the WEU on November 20 decided to start stop-and-search naval operations in the Adriatic.[44] But the German destroyer HAMBURG was ordered not to participate in the enforcement of these new measures, another indication of how difficult and far the prospects of ever achieving a European CFSP were.

In 1993, at a special meeting of the WEU Council (Luxembourg, April 5) a decision was taken to strengthen the effectiveness of the embargo on the Danube by a "police and custom" operation in cooperation with Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania. It was stressed that the operation, which would have a "non-military nature", would be based "on a system of coordinated control areas upstream and downstream of the Serbia border", with the aim of checking that transports toward Serbia did not contain goods banned by the sanctions.[45] To help the patrolling operations of the riparian countries, the WEU agreed to provide around 10 fast patrol boats and the support of 250-300 men. France, Germany, Italy,[46] Luxembourg, Norway and Spain declared their readiness to participate. Italy, then president of the WEU, assumed the responsibility of the coordination with the Danubian countries.[47]

It was another occasion for the WEU to demonstrate its capacity for playing a role, after the participation of WEU naval units in the embargo operations in the Adriatic and the explicit offer of 15,000 soldiers to participate directly in the peace enforcement operations in Sarajevo.

Even though the WEU agreed in the summer of 1992[48] to make military forces available for conflict prevention, humanitarian assistance, peacekeeping or task of combat forces in crisis management, it suffered from the same constraints as the EC. The EC internal divisions were logically reflected in the WEU policy decision process, and the WEU was initially unable to decide on an interposition force, and later on the use of military power. Moreover, the WEU was aware of the limitation of its military instrument, in particular in terms of C3 capabilities, high-tech weapons systems and logistic support.

6. NATO

In the early phases of the Yugoslav crisis, NATO maintained a low profile. NATO exchanged views on the crisis within the framework of the meetings of its Political and Military Committees and endorsed the EC management efforts as it did explicitly at the Rome summit in November 1991.

But gradually NATO was somewhat forced to expand its military involvement as it was the only organization with a truly credible military power. This was not an easy process. The

---

[44]. William Drozdiak, "NATO Agrees to Impose Blockade of Serbia", WP, 19 November 1992, p. A31. Alan Cowell, "Europeans and NATO Blockade Adriatic", IHT, 21-22 November 1992, p. 1. Ettore Petta, "Blocco dell'Adriatico. Flotta NATO in azione", CS, 19 November 1992, p. 13, and Guido Santevecchi, "L'Europa stringe la morsa jugoslava", CS, 21 November 1992, p. 7.

[45], See the text of the WEU "Declaration on implementation of U.N. sanctions on the former Yugoslavia" in AN, n. 2514, 7 April 1993, pp. 1-2.

[46]. Italy decided to participate with 80 custom guards and 2 patrol boats.

[47]. The WEU force became operative only on June 1993. The negotiations with the Danubian countries were more complicated than expected. Moreover, the WEU had to wait for the meeting of April 22 of the CSCE which was determining the operational framework of the Danube mission. On the reservations and conditions posed by those countries, see AN, n. 2515, 9 April 1993, p. 2. On the result of the controls, Europe, n. 6015, 5-6 July 1993, p. 3.

[48]. Petersberg Declaration, 19 June 1992.

divisions within NATO on the possibility and feasibility of a military intervention in Bosnia substantially duplicated those which have emerged within the EC and the WEU.

The emergence of a pre-eminent NATO role was gradual but unmistakable and was prompted by the UN recognition of NATO as the sole organization capable of providing the military force needed to support and enforce its resolutions -- an important element enhancing NATO's preeminence.

In fact, by mid-December, UN Secretary General Butros Ghali requested NATO to draw contigency plans for further military actions in Bosnia, including the enforcement of the "no-fly" zone approved by the Security Council in October.[49] Thus, by the end of the year, NATO appeared increasingly engaged in drafting feasibility studies of different military intervention options, in preparation for the decisions eventually made by the UN.[50]

Even the EC and UN mediators, Cyrus Vance and Lord Owen, wanted to use NATO aircraft to enforce the provisions of their peace plan.[51]

NATO provided equipment and experienced personnel from NORTHAG to the UNPROFOR headquarters in Bosnia.

On July 10, 1992 NATO decided to join the WEU naval force off the Yugoslavian coast first in the screening of the maritime traffic, then in enforcing the embargo when the rules of engagement were changed.[52] As previously said, NATO eventually assumed the operational control of the whole operation.

NATO AWACS aircraft flying over the Hungarian territory and the Adriatic sea have been transmitting essential information to U.N. authorities and helping NATO fighters deployed to Italian airbases[53] to enforce the "no-fly" zone established by SC Resolutions 781 and 816.

Meeting in Athens on June 10, the NATO Council decided to accept the U.N. request for an air cover and air support role for the protection of the Bosnian "safe areas" and the UNPROFOR force as mandated by the June 4 SC Resolution 836. NATO aircraft deployment began on July 13 and by July 22 British, Dutch, French and American fighter-bombers[54] were combat ready on Italian bases, joining the interceptors already operating over Bosnia in the framework of the operation "Deny Flight".

At a special NA Council in Brussels on August 2, NATO decided "to make immediate preparations for undertaking if the strangulation of Sarajevo and other areas continues, including wide-scale interference with humanitarian assistance, stronger measures, including air strikes against those responsible, Bosnian Serbs and others, in Bosnia-Herzegovina".[55] The "Operational Options for Air Strikes in Bosnia-Herzegovina" were approved by the NATO Council on August 9. In its final communiqué NATO declared it was prepared to act in coordination with the United Nations, when, and if, the situation demanded.[56]

---

[49]. "NATO Drafts Contingency Plans for UN Bosnia Intervention", IHT, 16 December 1992, p. 2.

[50]. The plans prepared by NATO on the enforcement of the "no-fly" zone were submitted to the UN Secretary General on January 14. Frederick Bonnart, "Bosnia: Limited Force Won't Help", IHT, 27 January 1993, p. 6.

[51]. The prospective use was for enforcement of the "no-fly" zone, of for strikes against those forces violating the peace-plan provisions. Paul Lewis, "Mediators Seek NATO Air Support In Bosnia", IHT, 8 February 1993, p. 2.

[52]. It is interesting to note that NATO was the first to decide on November 18 to start stop-and-search naval operations in the Adriatic, followed by the WEU on November 20.

[53]. Since April 12, 1993.

[54]. AN, n.2545, 23 July 1993, p. 1. The United States deployed 12 A-10, 18 F-18 and 10 support planes (among them, 4 AC-130). France deployed 8 Jaguar, the Netherlands 12 F-16s and the United Kingdon 12 Jaguar. By 16 July, UNPROFOR had established an Air Operation Control Center (AOCC) in Kiseljak as well as Tactical Air Control Parties (TACP). NA, n. 2544, 16 July 1993, p. 1.

[55]. The meeting, held at the request of the United States, lasted a lot longer than expected. There were divisions among the Sixteen on the issue of air strikes and true concerns about the connected risks. See the text of the statement of the Secretary General to the press on AN, n. 2547, 4 August 1993, p. 1.

[56]. It is interesting to note that the Council underlined that the air strikes foreseen by its 2 August declaration were limited to the support of humanitarian relief, and were not to be interpreted as a decision to intervene militarily in the conflict. In reality, the 2 August declaration clearly indicated the strangulation of Sarajevo and other Bosnian areas as

Finally, NATO agreed "in principle" to assume responsibility for the execution of a peace treaty in Bosnia but only under a clear and unambigous mandate, and clear objectives and rules of engagement for NATO.[57]

7. THE IMPLICATIONS AND THE LESSONS OF THE CRISIS

As we write, the Yugoslav civil war is still raging. Thus, it is difficult, at this stage, to speak about implications and lessons of Yugoslavia's disintegration. The short-term implications (and even more the long term effects) will depend on the end result of the crisis, on how the international community will interpret and assess it and on what of the overall evaluation will be considered a lesson to remember or an example to follow.

At this point, however, it may be said that the Yugoslav crisis demonstrated the following:

(i) In this post-Cold War and post-Communist Europe it is possible to use military force for the achievement of specific foreign policy goals, including territorial gains, without precipitating the intervention of any international organization or big power. In fact, it can be argued that the end of the East-West political and ideological struggle favors those developments. And it can be argued that in a polarized world the Western, and in particular American, reaction would have been totally different. When the Soviet influence and threat were the focus of the lens through which the West viewed any regional crisis, the potential disintegration of Yugoslavia would have prompted a different reaction. The prospect that the Soviets could gain strategic and political advantages would have sounded the alarm and provided a strong rationale for action.

(ii) The EC failure in shaping a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). The divisions among the Twelve dispelled the hope and the commitment expressed in the Maastricht Treaty. The EC failed to seize the opportunity to show to the world that Europe had finally become an important actor on the international scene, capable of successfully managing a dangerous crisis developing at its doorsteps.

(iii) The disappearance of an "enemy" as a factor of cohesion is bound to undermine NATO in the long run, unless the Alliance is able to reform itself and find a new "mission" which is shared by all members. The Euro-American differences on the policy to be adopted to check the war in Bosnia were deep. On the other hand, the enforcement of the "no-fly" zone over Bosnia, and the decision to apply NATO air power in the event of a Serbian attempt at strangulating Sarajevo and the other Bosnian safe areas are two good examples that agreement within NATO and a close cooperation among allies is the condition "sine-qua-non" for some results. In fact, only the NATO threat to use military force was able, at different stages of the crisis, to have an impact on its course, though limited because it appeared evident that behind the threat there was a weak and uncertain political will.

(iv) The slow pace of the U.N. decision making and crisis management process (even when an agreement was reached within the Security Council) and the time needed for the deployment of U.N. troops (even when there were countries willing to provide them).

(v) The need to reassess the meaning and the scope of U.N. "peacekeeping" missions and the use of force in international relations for the maintenance of stability and peace. Peacekeeping operations, which should be conducted only when peace is firmly established, should be clearly differentiated from peacemaking and peace-enforcing operations which very probably require the use of military forces. This is particularly true when the U.N. troops are charged with providing

---

a case for air strikes.

[57]. On September 29, the NATO Permanent Council approved the preliminary operational concept developed by the military authority. But details had yet to be defined in particular on the subject of command and control arrangements and funding of the operations. The projected size of the military force would be around 50,000 soldiers, about half provided by the United States.

humanitarian aid and at the same time expected to protect the population. Today, in Bosnia, U.N. Blue Helmets are trying only to escort the humanitarian convoys when the various ethnic bands let them pass through their lines, even though a specific Security Council Resolution requires that humanitarian aid should be delivered using all the necessary means. Putting an end to the carnage is not part of their mission; in any case, their military capability is insufficient to accomplish it.

The reassessment of the need to use military force within the framework of U.N. operations is ultimately bound to shape the restructuring and the posture of the armed forces of the major EC countries.

(vi) As far as the role of the international institutions (UN, EC, CSCE, NATO and WEU) is concerned, the Yugoslav crisis demonstrated the difficulty but also the inevitability for the institutions to work in an "interlocking mode".

(vii) The EC is not yet ready for a regional approach to crisis management, no matter how much its importance has been stressed in the past.

(viii) Very often the postponement of actions, which appear to be decisive or at least capable of having an impact on the crisis, means that the decision to act would have to be made later when the actions are more difficult, costly and probably less effective. In other words, the "cost of action" should always be compared with the "cost of inaction".

(ix) Self-determination cannot be considered an absolute principle, but should always be linked to the principles of the Helsinki Final Act: inviolability of frontiers, territorial integrity of states and peaceful settlement of disputes. The criteria for recognition established by the Arbitration Commission (the Badinter Commission) appear to be good precedents and on the line of those limitations.

(x) The principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of a state should find its limits when internal affairs become a threat to international or regional stability and security. In the Yugoslav case, the huge flow of refugees created by the war, the total disregard for human rights epitomized by the practice of "ethnic cleansing", the widespread destruction and human suffering, the possibility that the civil war might turn into a wider regional conflict are all elements which rightly call for international interference. In fact, several Security Council Resolutions adopted to deal with the crisis are "interference inspired".

8. ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS.

(i) It may be true that the international community has been forced to create international institutions to try to resolve problems that nation states cannot resolve on their own. But the international institutions work only if nation states decide to make them work. In other words, if there is no convergent or, better, common political will, no international institution would be capable of performing a concrete and significant crisis management role. Thus, even when operating in an "interlocking" mode the international institutions are only as effective as their capability to agree and act together. In fact, the impression is that in the Yugoslav crisis national interests have still played an important role in hampering the effectiveness of the international institutions, and that members actually used the institutional framework to check and constrain positions and policies of other members.

(ii) In July 1992, the CSCE agreed to become a formal "regional arrangement" under Chapter VII, Article 52, of the U.N. Charter. Under this provision, the CSCE could call on NATO and the WEU, and on individual countries to provide peacekeeping units when the conflict is within and among its member.[58] However, it has been clearly stated that peacekeeping operations will require the consent of all parties directly concerned. Moreover, the CSCE has limited its own role to the peaceful settlement of disputes, leaving to the U.N. the responsibility of eventually

[58]. Craig R. Whitney, "Security Conference Suspend Yugoslavs", IHT, 9 July 1992, p. 2.

enforcing peace. NATO (Atlantic Council in Oslo in June 1992) stated that it is ready to support peacekeeping activities under the responsibility of the CSCE.[59] In its Petersberg declaration, the WEU stated that it is prepared to support, on a case-by-case basis and in accordance with its procedures, the effective implementation of conflict-prevention and crisis-management measures, including peacekeeping activities of the CSCE or the United Nations Security Council.[60] Moreover, it appears that the WEU is also thinking about becoming a regional organization.[61] Finally, it appears that even the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) is preparing for a peacekeeping role.[62] One can argue that this proliferation has a limited operational significance and in the end it may complicate instead of facilitate peacekeeping, and particularly, peacemaking and peace-enforcing missions. As previously said, the commitments of the different international organizations to cooperate with the CSCE and the U.N. obviously depend on their capacity to find the necessary common political will. The Yugoslav crisis has demonstrated how difficult it is to reach a consensus when the use of military force is the predominant issue. No matter how close the relationship among members, the final word is still that of national governments, even in the case of the Post-Maastricht European Community. The national governments would have to consider the constraining elements of their different domestic situations and the reluctance (if not outright opposition) of public opinion to a military involvement which could entail human losses.

(iii) The more international organizations that provide military forces for peacekeeping and peacemaking operations, the more complicated the problems of coordination, command and control arrangements and intelligence information collection and distribution. Thus, the feasibility of the concept of "interlocking institutions" and their eventual mode of integration should be realistically measured in terms of operational pros and cons, i.e. in terms of true effectiveness in confronting a crisis situation.

(iv) In this context, the Yugoslav crisis has shown elements of cooperation and joint actions, as in the case of the CSCE-EC Sanctions Assistance Mission which coordinated and assisted national efforts, and in the case of the NATO and UN cooperation,[63] but also elements of tension as in the case between the EC and the U.N. on the U.N. supervision of Serbian heavy guns.[64]

(v) NATO's effort to demonstrate its viability even in the post-Cold War era, and its capacity to adapt to a different strategic environment, become evident in the Yugoslav crisis as did the WEU struggle for a security identity and a military role. This has led to a simmering competition between the two organizations and the emergence of a preeminent NATO role.[65]

---

[59]. Ministerial Meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Oslo, 4 June 1992, NATO Press Communiqué M-NAC-1(92)51.

[60]. WEU Council of Ministers, Bonn, 19 June 1992, Petersberg Declaration, Chapter 1, "On the WEU and European Security", Para 2 and Chapter 2 "On Strengthening WEU's Operational Role".

[61]. A report on "United Nations Operations - Interactions with the WEU" has been presented to the WEU Assembly in Paris on June 1993. The draft text recommends consideration of the advantages and the disadvantages of declaring the WEU a regional organization in the sense of the U.N. Charter. For additional details of the report, see AN, n. 2532, 9 June 1993, p. 3.

[62]. At the NACC meeting on 18 Decemebr 1992 a decision was taken to establish an Ad Hoc Group On Cooperation and Peacekeeping. The Group prepared a report which was presented to the NACC meeting in Athens on June 11, 1993. Text of the report in AN, n. 2536 (Annex), 18 June 1993.

[63]. Apart from NATO support to UN Resolutions, NATO Secretary General Manfred Woerner and U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali met on April 22, 1993 in Brussels and on September 1 in Geneva.

[64]. James B. Steinberg, cit. p. 23-24.

[65]. To balance the NACC, the WEU has established a "WEU Forum of Consultation" to allow regular consultations between its members, the Baltic countries and the countries of Central-Eastern Europe. For the competition in the specific Yugoslav case it would be sufficient to recall: the intention of both the WEU and NATO to send a police force to Mostar; the decision of WEU and NATO to deploy naval forces in the Adriatic to enforce the embargo; the contingency planning conducted by the two organizations for the same mission to be performed under the same command and control arrangements; the offer to U.N. for a level of troops which could be reached only with the participation of forces of NATO countries which were also members of the WEU. For more details, see Maurizio

9. CONCLUSIONS

At this point, only five final remarks seem pertinent.

(i) Up to now, the actions of the international organizations even when working in a cooperative mode ended in total failure because they were unable to manage the crisis in its initial phases or to stop the war in Bosnia

(ii) Considering the present situation, the military option does not appear to be a feasible alternative. A direct intervention to roll back Serb gains would require a huge ground force that no country or international institution is willing to provide, and the use of politically unacceptable military means. The use of airpower only is unlikely to change the situation on the ground, even if an extensive air campaign is contemplated, with escalatory options which would eventually involve Serbian territory and encompass large collateral damages and the killing of civilians.

(iii) On the other hand, if the use of military force to obtain territorial gains is eventually rewarded in the Yugoslav case European security will be weakened. The Serbian and Croatian examples might be followed by other countries or ethnic minorities throughout the continent.

(iv) The ability of the future European Union to operate effectively as a protagonist in the international arena will depend exclusively on its political credibility, economic power and military preparedness, and on its willingness to use them when needed. It would be regrettable if the example in confronting the Yugoslav crisis would be repeated in the future.

(v) One of the most important issue today is how and with what organization and which instruments the international community should respond to crises such as those in Yugoslavia, Somalia, Cambodia, Mozambique and Burundi, in which the humanitarian aspects, though preeminent, are only one part of the problem.

Cremasco, "Europe and the Yugoslav Crisis", unpublished paper, pp. 31-32.