

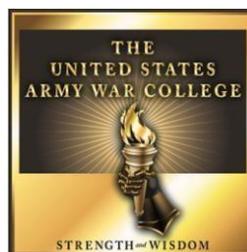
# Strategy Research Project International Fellow

## Security Sector Reform in Post-Conflict Kosovo

by

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## Security Sector Reform in Post-Conflict Kosovo

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### Abstract

After the failed negotiation at Rambouillet, in France between Kosovar Albanian and Serbs early 1999 left NATO no options but to use the force against the Yugoslav regime. For 78 days from March to Jun 1999, the United States and its NATO allies were engaged in the air campaign to bring an end to Serbian atrocities in Kosovo. UN Security Council resolution 1244 of 10 Jun 1999 and Military Technical Agreement achieved in Kumanovo, Macedonia between NATO and Yugoslavian Army open a new chapter for the future of Kosovo. This paper will address some of the biggest challenges, initiatives and unique approaches for Security Sector Reform (SSR) in post-conflict Kosovo. As such, the paper analyzes the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) program for the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), establishment of the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC), Kosovo Police Service (KPS) and the transitional government. Secondly, the paper addresses relevant SSR issues, such as rule of law and security force reforms in the political and strategic level, as well as enduring SSR challenges for the transformation of Kosovo Security Force into the Kosovo Armed Forces.

## **Security Sector Reform in Post-Conflict Kosovo**

Sometimes people say to me, 'Well, what was the difference between Kosovo, which was a successful intervention, and Iraq and Afghanistan that have been so difficult?' And the answer is perfectly simple. In Kosovo, you have, after the removal of the loss of its regime, you had a process of political and economic reconstruction that took its part without the intervention of terrorism. If you had the intervention of terrorism, by the way, it would have been extremely difficult there—but we didn't.

—Tony Blair <sup>1</sup>

While Security Sector Reforms (SSR) (particularly in the security realm) in Kosovo is progressing satisfactorily, its security institutions have yet to achieve proper effectiveness and efficiency in regards to the challenges facing a young democracy. The disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of KLA personnel, the establishment of a new organization and security institutions, political, local and central governance transition, and the transition of the Kosovo Security Force into the Kosovo Armed Forces are proceeding in accordance with the Strategic Security Sector Review (SSSR) recommendations. This Strategic Research Project analyzes the SSR policies and programs by the Government of Kosovo and the International Community and seeks to identify the political and practical obstacles, which have impeded progress.

### **Comprehensive DDR Process of KLA and Establishment of KPC**

More than 50,000 Kosovo Force (KFOR) troops under NATO command deployed to Kosovo in accordance with UN Security Resolution 1244 on June 10, 1999. One of the biggest challenges for KFOR was the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) process of armed groups, specifically the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). For more than two years (1997-1999), the KLA was engaged in military operations in Kosovo to protect the homeland and innocent Kosovar people against the Serbian military, paramilitary and police forces. More than 10,000 weapons were

handed in by December 1998.<sup>2</sup> The Kosovo Liberation numbered around 20,000 light-armed freedom fighters, organized in six different Operational Zones.<sup>3</sup> When KFOR troops took possession of Kosovo, its mandate under Article 9 of UN Security Resolution 1244 was to disarm and demobilize the KLA.<sup>4</sup> Reintegration of freedom fighters is one of the most difficult tasks in a post-conflict era.

The fledgling Kosovar government sought to transform the KLA into a defense organization with dual-purpose mission, akin to the U.S. National Guard: defend Kosovo territory and support the civil authority in crisis response operations.<sup>5</sup> After extensive discussions among the Kosovar representatives, United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) delegates, and KFOR commanders, the final agreement called for the creation of the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC), with the primary mission of civil protection, humanitarian projects in support to communities and disaster relief. In KFOR's view, the creation of the KPC was integral to the DDR process, which set the stage for security sector.<sup>6</sup>

After initial transition discussions on disarmament and demobilization of the KLA in June 1999, KFOR commander, General Michael Jackson announced:

In close consultation with UNMIK, KFOR subsequently developed a concept for a civilian, disciplined, uniformed and multi-ethnic emergency response service . . . that could provide needed emergency and other specialized services while absorbing substantial KLA manpower and directing its aspirations. The Corps will consist of up to 3,000 active and 2,000 reserve members who will be recruited and screened on an individual basis, in much the same manner as the Kosovo Police Corps."<sup>7</sup>

During the first three months of the post-conflict period, with few formal rule of law institutions and the return of 800,000 displaced persons to their homes over a three-week period, KFOR operations and coordination of interagency activities were hectic.<sup>8</sup>

The challenges of resettling displaced persons and at the same time, dealing with demilitarization were daunting. Paragraph 15, UNSCR 1244 (“Demilitarization and Transformation by the KLA soldiers,” 20 June 1999) laid down the overall agenda of the DDR process, permitting former KLA freedom fighters preferential placement in the new KPC and Kosovo Police Service (KPS).<sup>9</sup>

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) was intimately involved in the DDR process, assisting in the reintegration and training of former KLA combatants for civilian jobs, as well as financial assistance. Furthermore, beginning in February 2000, the IOM assisted in the training and education of the KPC to establish a professional force for crisis response missions.<sup>10</sup> The key focus of the IOM was to build KPC capacity through a Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC): Basic Training, Noncommissioned Officer Training, Officer Military Education and Training, English language courses, doctrine development, collective training and exercises, and overseas deployments of Kosovo contingents.<sup>11</sup> In terms of post-conflict reintegration building partner capacity and developing trust between the KPC and the civil population the IOM serves as a model for DDR programs. By 2008, the KPC was mission capable and ready to expand its roles of responsibility as an international partner in peace support operations.<sup>12</sup>

#### Establishment of Kosovo Police Service (KPS) and Judiciary System

Police reform and judicial reform were formidable goals in view of the complex security environment in Kosovo. The urgent need to reestablish police forces and the rule of law at the local, regional and central levels was of paramount importance. The immediate priority was to build police capability for the local communities throughout Kosovo. As such, UNMIK and KFOR requested that the Organization of Security and

Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) assume the mission of police reform. To fulfill its obligations, the OSCE organized for the mission, creating various supporting departments.

Like the IOM, OSCE serves as a model for building law enforcement institutions from scratch in a post-conflict environment. Having conducted similar missions in Croatia and Bosnia Hercegovina, the OSCE proved both capable and experienced.<sup>13</sup> The OSCE formulated, planned and established the first Kosovo Police School for the recruitment and training of the Kosovo Police Service. However, a controversy developed when KFOR and UNMIK sought to exclude former KLA combatants from the KPS, a proposal which the KLA commanders and Kosovar transitional government rejected.

While initial police training was delayed for a number of weeks as negotiations played out, all parties agreed that the first generation of police forces would comprise 50 percent of former KLA combatants after proper vetting.<sup>14</sup> In accordance with UNMIK's second pillar mandate to address and support human rights and the rule of law, OSCE coordinated the screening and selection process for police recruitment among the various international agencies. The same standards of training were to apply to both former KLA combatants and new civilian recruits, and the KPS was to have ethnic and gender equitable representation.

By 2007, the OSCE had succeeded in establishing a police force of around 8,000 personnel, as well as more than 30 police stations and 13 border patrols under the full command and control of Police headquarters in Pristina, with the exception of the northern part of Mitrovica province.<sup>15</sup> Of significance, the northern border area of

Kosovo remained politically sensitive, due to the Serb enclaves and Serbian political influence over the community. In no small measure, Kosovo's declaration of independence in 2008 marked the biggest challenge and the most critical situation in terms of ethnic Serb representation in the KPS. As a result of political sensitivities and the urging of Belgrade officials, a majority of Kosovar Serb policemen abandoned their posts and refused to perform their daily duties.<sup>16</sup> After intense negotiations in Brussels, Kosovo and Serbia reached an agreement in 2013 for the integration of the Kosovar Serb Police into the Kosovo central Police system; however, command and control remains more collaborative than centrally administered.

OSCE's Kosovo Police Service program was a remarkable achievement for international community. Currently, the Kosovo Police Service remains the most proficient, compared to other regional police organizations, in regards to services rendered to local communities.<sup>17</sup>

More problematic for UNMIK, OSCE, and other international organizations was the reform of Kosovo's judiciary. Overlapping responsibilities and poor coordination between the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) and OSCE contributed to the meager progress in judicial reform. The UNHCHR experienced problems in the field because of a limited budget and personnel shortages to support the local and regional courts.<sup>18</sup>

UNMIK was not prepared to deal with the judicial vacuum either. The Kosovar Albanians had not been part of the Serbian judiciary system since 1989 (a 10-year gap). Furthermore, the legal system of the former Yugoslavia was not compatible with European Union and Western democratic values. UNMIK faltered due to unclear policy

and strategy for judicial reform, compounded by a paucity of personnel and resources to create the necessary momentum for rule of law.<sup>19</sup> Building an effective rule of law system remains a challenge for Kosovo and an obstacle for integration into the European Union. While Kosovo had made great strides in the judiciary since the declaration of independence and the transfer of responsibility from UNMIK, the judicial system still lacks the necessary foundation for improving quality, efficiency and performance.<sup>20</sup>

Most of the challenges to judicial reform are essentially political, particularly the need for a uniform rule of law throughout Kosovo. Specifically, the full integration of the Serb enclaves under the Kosovo Constitution and into the judicial system requires international commitment and unwavering support.<sup>21</sup>

An important feature of the judicial system was the establishment of the Special Court, which prosecuted crimes committed during the Kosovo war. On 3 August 2015, after a lengthy political battle and two attempts by the government, the Kosovo Assembly finally approved the necessary constitutional changes in order to establish the Special Court.<sup>22</sup> The Court is intended to address allegations stemming from the Council of Europe report (known also as the Dick Marty Report) which alleged that some members of the then Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) had committed war crimes. The establishment of the Special Court demonstrates Kosovo's commitment to the rule of law and respect for international agreements. The Special Court will operate within the Kosovo justice system, but it will have a chamber abroad to enhance witness protection.<sup>23</sup> The Special Court will be in the Netherlands, subject to ratification by the

Kosovo Assembly of the agreement between Kosovo and Netherlands, the country hosting the Court's Headquarters.

### Political Transition in Post-Conflict Kosovo

Intense political partisanship remains a significant obstacle to successful SSR. Two political parties dominate governmental affairs: the first is the Kosovo Democratic Party (PDK) under Hashim Thaci, which is an extension of the former KLA political bureau, representing former combatants; the second is the Kosovo Democratic League (LDK), which was a pacifist movement and shadow government under the Serbian regime from 1989 to 1998 and led by Dr. Ibrahim Rugova.<sup>24</sup> During the transitional period, political disagreements between the two parties grew harsh and eventually lethal with the killing of ten politicians, predominately from the LDK. According to an investigation by the European Mission for Rule of Law in Kosovo (EULEX), the evidence suggested that the murders were politically motivated.<sup>25</sup> The UN mandate empowered UNMIK to provide the interim administration pending a final political settlement. Accordingly, UNMIK collaborated with the Kosovo population and the political parties in the course of administration. At the end of its six-month interim, UNMIK concluded a December 1999 Agreement on a Joint Interim Administrative Structure (JIAS), which provided the basic model for governance in Kosovo until the transfer of responsibility from UNMIK to elected Provisional Institutions of Self-Government (PISG) occurred in 2002.<sup>26</sup>

After the first municipal elections in October 2000, approximately after one year under transitional authority, UNMIK oversaw municipal elections in October 2000, resulting in municipal assemblies and presidents. Progressively, UNMIK transitioned from an active role in the administration to a supervisory role. In May 2001, the Special

Representative of Secretary General (SRSG) signed the first Constitutional Framework on Provisional Self-Government under Kosovar authority. The document was not a constitution as such, as all legislative and executive authority remained with the SRSG until Kosovo's Independence in 2008; rather it provided structural rules for the creation, functions, and interaction among the provisional institutions, such as the Kosovo Assembly, the President of Kosovo, and the central government, comprised of a prime minister and ministers.<sup>27</sup>

#### The Organizational Challenges and Ineffectiveness of New Security Structures in Kosovo

Although substantial progress was made in Kosovo's security realm, the KPC structure still lagged in terms of effectiveness and professionalism. Basically, the KPC structure remained unwieldy with Six Protection Zones, the Kosovo Guard, Logistic Commands, TRADOC, and Support Elements. The core structure and Table of Equipment (TOE) was top heavy in officer and NCO positions but with insufficient lower enlisted ranks, creating subsequent difficulties with the promotion system, personnel management, training, and readiness of the entire protection force (Table 1).

Table 1. (KPC's Structure as of July 2006)<sup>28</sup>

KPC's Structure as of July 2006			
Rank	Active	Serving Members	Reserve
Lt.General	1	1	0
Maj. General	2	1	0
Brig. General	14	13	0
Colonel	50	48	2
Lt.Colonel	119	117	2
Major	209	203	13
Captain	356	356	60
Lieutenant	440	436	136
Staff Sargent	439	438	96
Sargent	366	365	188
Corporal	1,035	1,028	1,438
Private	21	20	65
Total	3,052	3,026	2,000

The need to manage and maintain forty casernes dispersed throughout Kosovo, along with a limited defense budget and lack of capital investment undermined efficiency and cost effectiveness. The selection process was not in accord with UNMIK Regulation No 8, even though the international policy-makers stated that KPC recruitment, screening, and selection would follow the same process as the Kosovo Police Service (KPS) <sup>29</sup>.

Contrary to the KPS selection and screening process, the KPC did not rigorously vet its personnel. Instead, KLA Zone Commanders submitted nomination lists to KFOR for approval and filled their ranks with favored subordinates. Despite these stumbling blocks, the KPC proved to be a stabilizing element for the security of Kosovo. KPC integration of minorities and assistance to rural areas through humanitarian projects were positive factors for enduring stability in Kosovo.

Although International Organizations and NGOs provided invaluable assistance to Kosovo during the post-conflict period, they experienced problems with efficiency.

Overlapping areas of responsibility and poor coordination created confusion and disunity of effort. For example, the involvement of various agencies in the same task created problems due to different agendas, mandates, and methods of operation. In addition, from a military point of view, the six-month or nine-month personnel rotations in the KFOR staff caused some difficulties with the continuity of programs and the transfer of knowledge, especially in terms of training, inspections and advising of the KPC.<sup>30</sup>

#### Dissolution of the Kosovo Protection Force and Establishment of Kosovo Security Force

Due to ongoing organizational and management problems in the Kosovo Protection Corps, UN Special Envoy for Kosovo Martti Ahtisaari presented his "Comprehensive Proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement" plan in Pristina and Belgrade on February 2, 2007, which envisioned the replacement of the KPC with a new force:

There will be a new force, professional and multiethnic Kosovo Security, which shall be lightly armed and will be able to cover specific security needs according to Appendix VIII of this agreement. The Kosovo Protection Corps, having reached their goal, including the facilitation of reconstruction after the war in Kosovo will be disbanded with dignity one year after adoption of this agreement.<sup>31</sup>

Later that year, NATO established a Military Civilian Advisory Division (MCAD), within HQ KFOR, to study the demobilization of the KPC and establishment of the Kosovo Security Force (KSF), as a first step in reforming Kosovo's security organizations.<sup>32</sup> The first and most critical task was to establish democratic civil-military relations (i.e., civil authority over the military). Accordingly, NATO created a NATO Advisory Team (NAT) to assist in the establishment of a Ministry of KSF (MKSF) under

civilian leadership. Fostering support of civil-military relations during the transition from KPC to KSF was of critical importance to both civilian and military leaders.

Following Kosovo's independence in 2008, NATO focused on the reorganization, mission, and training of the new force. In a ceremony honoring the service of the KPC, the KSF came into being on January 20, 2009. The KSF initially had a national security mission limited to territorial defense, with no offensive weapons, such as tanks, and attack aircraft. The process was very complex due to the circumstances and stakeholders involved in the process. NATO had the responsibility—in coordination with the KPC leadership—to design and properly plan for the smooth transition to the KSF.

Under the mentoring and advising role of MCAD and NAT, NATO undertook the education, training, and development of the KSF. The biggest contributor to the training and educational system has been through U.S. security cooperation and the State Partnership Program with the Iowa National Guard. KSF reached operational capability in July 2013.

Nevertheless, the U.S. government strongly supported a key recommendation of the Strategic Security Sector Review (SSSR) to transform the KSF into the Kosovo Armed Forces (KAF). This recommendation has presented many internal political and legal challenges, operational capability gaps, and the transformation of KSF ministry into the Ministry of Defense legally and organizationally.

#### Internal Security Sector Review (ISSR) 2005-2006 and Strategic Security Sector Review in Kosovo 2012-2014

The Kosovo Internal Security Sector Review (ISSR) was a consultative process with the purpose of understanding the security environment, threats and opportunities to Kosovo as well as providing advice on the future needs of security capability and the

process of determining final status. During the ISSR in Kosovo, the process of reviewing the security sector was different, because the security remains the responsibility of UNMIK and KFOR for Kosovo's internal safety and territorial defense from the external threats. In addition, the ISSR identified some policymaking processes and structures that can support Kosovo's internal and external security needs following a determination of final status.<sup>33</sup> Some of those recommendations and findings are used from the Martti Ahtisaari, UN Special Envoy for Kosovo, in "Comprehensive Proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement."<sup>34</sup>

After the Kosovo Independence in 2014, the Kosovo Government approved the Strategic Security Sector Review of the Republic of Kosovo (SSSR), which recommended that Kosovo assume greater responsibilities to safeguard its sovereignty and territorial integrity and gradually develop territorial defense capabilities in three phases. The SSSR gave a number of specific recommendations in order to achieve this, including the development of a new National Security Strategy, a new National Defense Strategy, a new National Response Plan and most significantly, the transition of the KSF to the KAF. Significant professional advice to the Government of Kosovo and direct support to the MKSF on the transformation planning process are provided bilaterally by the United States Office for Defense Cooperation (ODC) Defense Institutional Reform Initiative (DIRI) team, which visited Kosovo continually from 2012 until 2016. The aim of the DIRI involved advice, mentorship, and professional support to the Government of Kosovo, MKSF, and KSF on strategic planning and preparations for transformation.<sup>35</sup>

Transitioning to the KAF is by no means straightforward. The issue has led to a prolonged and contentious debate in Kosovo's parliament. Parliamentary sessions in April 2014 failed to reach political consensus regarding the issue of transformation, with the main Kosovar Albanian opposition party voicing opposition to any constitutional changes for the time being.<sup>36</sup>

Political dissent came about due to party parochialism. After the failure to amend the constitution on transformation and to reserve seats for the Serb minorities in parliament, the President of Kosovo, announced early elections in June 2014, with the agreement of all political parties. As a result of the elections that summer, the Kosovo Democratic Party (PDK) gained a majority of seats in parliament, prompting the formation of a new coalition government. It took more than six months of negotiations to consolidate the government, with a coalition comprising the two major Albanian parties and the Serb Political Party (Srpska List). In turn, the new government reviewed its security strategy and key objectives for the 2015-2018 period:

During this mandate of the Government, Kosovo will continue to build its capabilities in terms of security, as well as to contribute in international peace missions, dialogue, and resolution of crises and humanitarian assistance and development. Special commitment will continue to be given to the process of transformation of the Kosovo Security Forces into Kosovo Armed Forces, based on the Strategic Review of the Security Sector (2014-2024), by continuing its professionalism in close cooperation with NATO, as well as in bilateral level with the Euro-Atlantic partners<sup>37</sup>

Currently, there is still no clear political path for the transition of the KSF to the KAF. Serbian influence through the Srpska List has also stymied policy progress. Serbian meddling in Kosovo's domestic politics implies that the Serbian strategic objective is to create instability and delay the establishment of Kosovo Armed Forces.<sup>38</sup>

Based on public statements, the Serbian Government's objective is to bring the KAF issue into EU-sponsored negotiations and linked to the normalization of relations between Belgrade and Pristina.<sup>39</sup> These intrigues not only impact Kosovo's future prosperity and organizational development, they also affect interoperability with NATO and the NATO integration dialogue and initiation of Partnership for Peace (PfP) process.

Making compromises with Serbia on KAF transformation can create a domino effect. Serbia's immediate objective is to create separate command and control structures within the KAF. Thus, the predominately Serb area of northern Kosovo wants an infantry battalion stationed there, falling under the command and control of the Serbian Municipalities Association, as is practiced by the police forces. As the Bosnian Serbs and Serbia practiced in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the proposed command and control arrangement would prove ineffective and very dangerous for the future of Kosovo Armed Forces. Decentralized command and control based on Serb ethnicity would negatively affect proper central command and control.

In addition, this military arrangement would create a status quo situation, especially in light of the continued international military presence in Kosovo, and Freedom House's ranking of Kosovo as an unstable country politically and militarily.<sup>40</sup> The obstacles emplaced by political blocs have consequently delayed Kosovo's efforts for NATO integration, which continues to be challenged due to the need to demonstrate territorial defense of the country.

From an international perspective—EU, NATO and the USA—the political discord regarding the transformation of the KSF is a domestic issue, requiring Kosovo's political parties to reach consensus and adoption of constitutional amendments as soon

as possible. Above all, Kosovo must demonstrate transparency with all neighboring countries through dialogue and diplomacy, achieve domestic political consensus, and decrease ethnical tensions inside and outside of Kosovo.<sup>41</sup>

An amendment of the Constitution would require a double two-thirds vote: the approval of two-thirds of all members of the Parliament, and an approval of two-thirds of all members of the Parliament holding reserved or guaranteed seats for representatives of communities that are not in the majority in the Republic of Kosovo. Hence, progress on KSF transformation must wait until parliament resolves the constitutional impasse.<sup>42</sup>

NATO troops in Kosovo have been operating under UN Resolution 1244 since 1999, and since 2008, the EU has undertaken the largest European mission ever for Rule of Law (EULEX). Both of these missions remain neutral on this issue of Kosovo Independence. The NATO secretary general announced in press media in 2015, "NATO is under the 1244 resolution mandate; we are doing capacity-building in Kosovo, especially training and advising KSF on current mandate."<sup>43</sup> In consonance with NATO criteria:

The Kosovo Security Forces shall be lightly armed and possess no heavy weapons, such as tanks, heavy artillery or offensive air capability. The International Military Presence, in coordination with the International Civilian Representative, will determine any changes. A full review of these limits to be conducted, no earlier than 5 years from the date this Law enters into Forces.<sup>44</sup>

Although the Kosovo Government has yet to make progress on the necessary constitutional changes for the legal establishment of the Kosovo Armed Forces, transformation remains one of the Ministry for Kosovo Security Force main priorities. The draft law and financial package were submitted to the government for review in April 2015, with the establishment of a Transformation Implementation Committee to

oversee and direct the transformation, and a Transformation Department to carry out the day-to-day planning.

The Kosovo Government has not made any progress in implementing the other key recommendations of the Kosovo Security Sector Review and therefore key components of Kosovo's security architecture remain missing, such as a revised national security strategy and a defense strategy.

The Kosovo Security Forces Ministry is responsible for developing policy and strategy for the current mission, while at the same time planning for structural and legal aspects of transformation.

In view of the political impasse resulting from domestic and external disputes, as well as the legal roadblocks regarding the transformation of the KSF into KAF, a viable alternative may be to: redouble diplomatic efforts with U.S., EU, and NATO; achieve a compromise solution within the coalition government (including Serb minorities) in regards to transformation; and amend the constitution as soon as possible.

If the Serb minorities in the coalition government refuse to support the constitutional changes (as reported in the media), the government will need to proceed with a "Plan B," by changing the law for Kosovo Security Forces and Ministry for KSF<sup>45</sup>. The fundamental legal changes would affect the mission and current tasks of the KSF, requiring a revised territorial defense mission, as long as it is in accord with the current constitution. The coalition government should work closely with the opposition party and in full accordance with U.S. and NATO to proceed with the Plan B. The importance of an information campaign with clear strategic messages for the Serb Community is

necessary. Plan B would be a temporary measure until the next election, when the political situation permits formal amendment to the constitution.

Plan B permits the continued development of a territorial defense capability, the acquisition of new weapons systems, and the start of negotiations with NATO for KSF participation in Partnership for Peace (PfP). At the operational level, a dialogue with NATO regarding the timetable for KFOR withdrawal represents a new phase for Kosovo's national security. In place of KFOR, the KSF would deploy more troops in northern Kosovo (multiethnic composition) and continue capacity building through NATO mentors and mobile training teams over the next three years.

#### Lesson Learned

To a large extent, the uncertainty and partisanship besetting the transformation of the KSF is a result of friction between the central government and local Serb communities as well as the shared responsibilities between Kosovar and international authorities. Further, the UNMIK administration has created confusion with its unilateral implementation of rule of law, local governance and the judicial system, foregoing close cooperation with the Kosovo government.<sup>46</sup>

The international community failed to establish defense priorities and adhere to a long-term planning process in regards to defense capability and capacity for territorial defense and the transition of KFOR responsibility to Kosovo Security Force.

The international community also applied a double standard in regards to integrating Serb northern enclaves politically and socially, permitting them to resist full integration in the name of local autonomy, thereby impeding national reconciliation. Moreover, the delay in crafting strategic documents (i.e., NSS, NDS and NMS) has impeded civilian control of the security apparatus.

Finally, the international community has yet to address abiding issues including the nature of the UN mission after the Kosovo independence, the languorous pace of Euro-Atlantic integration, and the political challenges with diplomatic initiatives and negotiations with Serbia.

### Conclusions

While it is too soon to assess the whole security sector reform in post-conflict, security sector reform is a huge success story from the national and international engagement in Kosovo. Those unique and sui-generis approaches at all levels can be useful and a great model for future reintegration and security building processes at post-conflict situations in the world. Despite all of those achievements, the transition time was too long, with several transitional organizations, which can have a negative impact in the long term. A clear vision and understanding of the end states at the end of the process is vital for the implementation of SSR programs in the post-conflict era. A solution that proves to bring stability in the short-term may not be the best solution in the long run. In terms of security sector reform in post-conflict Kosovo, the priorities were not clear from the international community.

Kosovo as a young democracy still has to do a lot in terms of effectiveness and organizational efficiency. The internal integration of all society for the benefit of the country is critical for the future. However, the deep political disagreement between Serb communities in Kosovo with Kosovo Central Government may remain one of the most enduring challenges for the consolidation and fulfillment of Kosovo's security structure.

The Serb community in Kosovo is directly influenced by the Belgrade government, and lastly in 2017 active Russian influence is increasing instability in the northern part of Kosovo.<sup>47</sup> These internal political grievances with the direct and indirect

involvement of Serbia and Russia are a potential threat for the future of Kosovo. Obstacles with the NATO and EU integration process will impede progress and prosperity for the citizens of Kosovo.

Despite all of these impediments, Kosovo should work and engage closely the Kosovo Serb community through positive initiatives, with the following recommendations:

- Preparation, planning and execution of large and enhanced strategic communications to counter Serbian and Russian propaganda in the north part of territory.
- Increased economic investment in rural areas with clear messages of job creation and a better life for the Serb community as an incentive for greater national unity.
- Continuation of the technical dialog with Serbia under EU facilitation, but remaining attentive to political agendas.
- Continued engagement and vigilance of KFOR and EU through EULEX with a focus on the proper forces in the northern part of Kosovo.
- Continuation of the State Partnership Program with the Iowa National Guard with the goal of full interoperability for future operations and Kosovo progress in general.

The security dynamics and challenges that the world is currently facing will likely have an impact on the future of the international presence in Kosovo. Eventually, KFOR and the international community will leave Kosovo, which is necessary and crucial for Kosovo's security responsibilities to protect all communities and defend territorial

integrity. However, Kosovo should remain steadfast and continue good cooperation with the EU, NATO and most importantly with its strategic partner, United States of America, because the military capability and Kosovo national interests is based on the relationship with the Western values.

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mechanisms necessary to ensure that: Kosovo is governed by the highest democratic standards, and to promote the peaceful and prosperous existence of all its inhabitants. The Constitution shall include, but not be limited to, the principles and provisions contained in Annex I of this Settlement. 1.4 Kosovo shall have an open market economy with free competition. 1.5 Kosovo shall have the right to negotiate and conclude international agreements and the right to seek membership in international organizations. 1.6 The official languages of Kosovo shall be Albanian and Serbian. The Turkish, Bosnian and Roma languages shall have the status of official languages at the municipal level or will be in official use in accordance with the law. 1.7 Kosovo shall have its own, distinct, national symbols; including a flag, seal and anthem, reflecting its multi-ethnic character. 1.8 Kosovo shall have no territorial claims against, and shall seek no union with, any State or part of any State. 1.9 Kosovo shall cooperate fully with all entities involved in the implementation of, and undertake all obligations under, this Settlement. Kosovo and the Republic of Serbia are encouraged to cooperate in good faith on issues pertinent to the implementation and realization of the terms of this Settlement. 1.10 Kosovo and the Republic of Serbia are encouraged to establish a joint commission to facilitate such cooperation, as well as to pursue and develop good neighborly relations. 1.11 The international community shall supervise, monitor and have all necessary powers to ensure effective and efficient implementation of this Settlement, as set forth in Annexes IX, X and XI. Kosovo shall also issue an invitation to the international community to assist Kosovo in successfully fulfilling its obligations to this end. Published on 26 March 26, 2007, <http://reliefweb.int/report/serbia/comprehensive-proposal-kosovo-status-settlement-s2007168add1> (accessed March 17, 2017).

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