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Ethnic Mobilization in Macedonia
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Appendix 1
Appendix 2
1. Actors and Process of Ethno-Mobilization*

1.1. Definition

Ethno-mobilization is political mobilization along ethnic lines.¹

1.2. Actors

1.2.1. Actors of ethno-mobilization

The state and its institutions, politicians and political parties, the media, religious leaders, education institutions and intellectuals, as well as civil society organizations (in an ethnically divided society) can be actors of ethno-mobilization.

(a) Domestic /internal

Federally oriented actors in Macedonia were mostly found among orthodox members of the League of Communists of Macedonia, high-ranking officers of the Yugoslav National Army, members and children of mixed marriages and people that had declared themselves as “Yugoslav” on previous censuses.

Republic-oriented actors were mostly found among the domestic non-communist elite, nationalist oriented intellectuals and members of the MAAK (Movement for Pan-Macedonian Action) and VMRO-DPMNE (Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization- Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity) political parties. Republic oriented sentiments gained additional support after the killing of a Macedonian soldier in the Yugoslav Peoples Army (YPA), Sasko Gesovski in Split, Croatia in 1991. That same year Macedonian Admiral Dragoljub Bocinov declined the order to shell the city of Split and was imprisoned by the YPA. Soon, Macedonian soldiers refused to be drafted in the YPA and the remaining ones were withdrawn.

However, the main source of destabilization of the country came from the trans-republican struggle for greater rights of the ethnic Albanians in SFRY, and its implications on ethno-mobilization in Macedonia. Following the historic pattern, it can be concluded that incidents in the ethnic Albanian populated areas of Macedonia were replicated and inspired from Kosovo. Such is the case with the demonstrations in 1968 (two years after the removal from office of Aleksandar Rankovic) “demanding the republican status for Kosovo and independent university, which was followed by similar demonstrations in Tetovo where the Albanians for the first time called for Albanian areas of Macedonia to be annexed to Kosovo in a seventh republic.”² Protests were repeated with far greater intensity and violence in Kosovo in 1981, a year following the death of Josip Broz-Tito. In both cases, the demonstrations that were taking place throughout Kosovo were supported by demonstrations held in Macedonia.

* The Report on Ethnic Mobilization in Macedonia is written with the assistance of Dr. Tove H. Malloy.


² Premysl Rosulek, “Albanians in Macedonia- ethnic minority or second constituted nation?”, http://www.eurac.edu/summeracademy/progr/Rosulek.pdf
predominantly in the towns of Tetovo and Gostivar. However, the demonstrations held in Macedonia were with far lower intensity and without deadly casualties. As a reaction to the ongoing crisis in the neighbourhood, the government of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia took some counter-productive measures against the “Albanian nationalism and secessionism”, such as the provision in the 1985 Law on Secondary Education (“Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia/ Republic of Macedonia” 16/85, 2/86, 29/86, 7/88, 18/89, 29/89, 12/90, 11/91, 40/91, and 14/95), which stipulated that secondary education in minority languages would be provided if the number of minority students in the class exceeds 30. As a result of this measure, the number of secondary school students receiving instruction in Albanian fell dramatically between 1981 and 1991. This provision was later changed and the number of ethnic Albanian students in secondary education taught in Albanian had significantly increased (Table 1).


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>No. students</th>
<th>No. teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Albanian language of instruction</td>
<td>Albanian language of instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980/1981</td>
<td>9,754</td>
<td>564</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990/1991</td>
<td>2,535</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994/1995</td>
<td>7,377</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997/1998</td>
<td>12,114</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003/2004</td>
<td>19,402</td>
<td>1035</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the late 1980s, “interethnic relations between the majority and the largest minority had been far from relaxed; the extent of mutual distrust between the two communities increased when the majority proclaimed a ‘Macedonian nation-state’ in 1989 and, the minority in turn largely rejected Macedonian independence and, subsequently, boycotted the referendum on this issue in 1991.”3 Whereas the Preamble of the 1974 Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia defined the country as “the national state of the Macedonian nation and state of the Albanian and Turk nationalities”4, it was changed in 1989 using the formula of “national state of the Macedonian people,” and finally the preamble of the 1991 Constitution of Republic of Macedonia, declared that “it a is historical fact that Macedonia is established as a national state of the Macedonian people, in which full equality as citizens and permanent co-existence with the Macedonian people is provided for Albanians, Turks, Vlachs, Roma and other nationalities living in the Republic of Macedonia.”5 Therefore the 1991 Constitution in its preamble made a symbolic shift towards including the ethnic Macedonians as a “titular” nation. In what was essentially a “civic constitution” (excluding the preamble and the debate whether it is a part of the constitution),

4 Joseph Marko, “The Referendum for Decentralization in Macedonia in 2004: A Litmus Test for Macedonia’s Interethnic Relations”, Competence Center South-East Europe at the University of Graz, http://www.uni-graz.at/suedosteuropa/media/Macedonia.pdf, p.3
group rights of the nationalities were shifted to an individual basis and guarantees. The Macedonian language and its Cyrillic alphabet were declared the official language of the Republic of Macedonia, and the official use of the languages of nationalities was limited to the local level in the units of local self-government where the majority or a “considerable number” (20%) of inhabitants belonged to a nationality. The 1991 Constitution did not envisage a group right to political representation nor the use of Albanian language in Parliament. In addition, due to a decision of the Constitutional Court, “the provision in the law on administration [from] 1985 requiring respect for the languages of the nationalities [was] erased in 1994.” As a reaction to this, ethnic Albanians refused “not only to be a ‘minority’ with fewer rights than before 1991, protected only by non-discrimination on an individual basis, but they insisted on being accepted as an equal partner in group terms.” Therefore the ethnic Albanian leaders put forward the following demands: state-forming “constitutive” status for the Albanian community with veto powers, and recognition of the Albanian language as the official language in use with the public authorities in Albanian settled territories, and in Parliament.

As a result of the latent fear of the Macedonian state leadership from federal-oriented forces, the question posed at the referendum for independence, conducted on 8 September 1991, was formulated in the following way: “Are you in favour of an independent state of Macedonia, with the right to enter a future union of sovereign states of Yugoslavia?” This formulation was constructed in order to mobilize the support from both federal and republic oriented forces, since both saw their own interest in giving a positive answer to the referendum question. Otherwise, theoretically speaking, it is unnecessary to stress the “right to enter a future union of sovereign states of Yugoslavia” since an independent and sovereign state has that right to enter into union with other sovereign states per se.

(b) External actors in the phase of (latent and open) ethno-mobilization

In the early 1990s the activities of the ethnic Macedonian diaspora were directed towards the creation and recognition of the independent Macedonian state and the rights of ethnic Macedonians in the neighboring countries, rather than ethno-mobilization against national minorities in Macedonia. Later on, during the 2001 conflict, much of the ethnic Macedonian diaspora rallied support for the hard-line interior minister Ljube Boskovski.

At that time, the ethnic Albanian diaspora concentrated its support to their co-nationals in Kosovo, rather than in Macedonia, having in mind the persistent violence that they were facing in Kosovo, in comparison to their significantly better status and treatment in Macedonia. Later on, after NATO entered Kosovo in 1999, and the UCPMB (Liberation Army of Presevo, Medvedja and Bujanovac), in the triangle between Southern Serbia, Kosovo and Macedonia, stopped operating by mid 2001, much of the support that was previously going to the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and UCPMB was geared towards the newest organizational form, the National Liberation Army (NLA) that operated in Macedonia until the Autumn of 2001.

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6 As defined in Art. 88 of the 1995 Law on Local Self-Government (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, 52/95)
7 Marko, “The Referendum for Decentralization in Macedonia in 2004 ... “
8 Ibid. p.9
1.2.2. Social strata to which the actors belong

(a) Politicians

The liberal leadership of the League of Communists of Macedonia left the 14th Extraordinary Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia on 20 January 1990, along with the Slovenian and Croatian delegations. This event marked the beginning of the dissolution of SFRY, since it lost one of its crucial cohesive factors, the other being the Yugoslav People’s Army.

At the first pluralist parliamentary elections in Macedonia, held in November-December 1990, the League of Communists of Macedonia-Party for Democratic Transformation lost the elections to the nationalist VMRO-DPMNE. On 25 January 1991, the Macedonian Assembly voted for a Declaration of Sovereignty and a Declaration of the Right to Secede from the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY). In March 1991 a new non-partisan “expert” Government of Macedonia was elected. On 31 March that year a nation-wide census was conducted. Ethnic Albanian leaders did not recognize the results of the 1991 Census (for further reading see Appendix I).

Conflict management in Macedonia in the period from 1990 to 2001 ranged from unsuccessful integration to the emergence of ideas and plans for partitioning the country.

Although the 1991 Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia made a symbolic shift toward recognizing the ethnic Macedonians as the “titular nation” and can be characterized as a “hybrid mix of the nation-state and state-nation concepts,” its primary intention was to integrate the citizens of the country at the individual, not the group level. This strategy was in line with President Kiro Gligorov’s policy of “peace and co-existence.”

This strategy was not successful, since ethnic Albanians did not accept being a “national minority” standing equal with the others on individual and citizenship terms, but demanded the status of a constituent nation as a group. At the very beginning of Macedonia’s independence ethnic parties were formed. In addition, the emerging civil society became ethnically divided. Therefore, integration as a method of “eliminating differences” could not be implemented. There was a subsequent proposal in 2001 to partition the country along Macedonian-Albanian ethnic lines that would also have included an exchange of population and territory with a small ethnic Macedonian populated area of Albania. This approach was advocated by several members of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts, as one of the possible solutions to the Macedonian-Albanian ethnic conflict and was supported by Ljubco Georgievski, the Prime Minister of Macedonia at that time, and by Arben Xhaferi, the leader of the DPA. Due to strong domestic and international resistance to such an idea, the proposal was abandoned. Therefore in order to prevent an outbreak of large-scale ethnic violence, and to preserve fragile inter-ethnic relations in Macedonia, the ethnic conflict was managed through a combination of gradual concessions towards the requirements of ethnic Albanians, coercive means and corrupt exchanges between ethnic elites.

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9 Marko, “The Referendum for Decentralization in Macedonia in 2004 ... “ p.5
A positive development towards the stability of inter-ethnic relations in this period was that all governing coalitions from 1992 until the present have included ethnic Albanian political parties. Even the “expert cabinet” government of 1990 to 1992 included ethnic Albanian ministers. Specifically, the ethnic Albanian parties, first the Party for Democratic Prosperity (PDP), then the Democratic Party of Albanians (DPA) and, from 2002-2006, the Democratic Union for Integration (DUI) party, had some share of ministers, vice-presidents of governments, directors of state-owned companies, and other top managerial positions in public administration. Also on the level of local self-government, municipalities with majority ethnic Albanian populations had Albanian mayors and members of municipal councils. However, ethnic Albanians were markedly underrepresented in public administration.

One of the reasons for this situation was the insufficient number of ethnic Albanians educated at the tertiary level. This was a combined result of the closing of Pristina University in Kosovo, a higher education hub for Albanians in the region, by the Milosevic regime in the 1990s, and of an internal Macedonian factor, notably the short-sighted politics of Macedonian governments from the end of the 1980s until the year 2000. The series of mistakes made by the Macedonian governments during that period put the education issue on the “hot” ethno-political agenda for years, and radicalized not only ethnic Albanian political elites but the wider ethnic Albanian population, especially its youth. This type of situation would be hazardous for inter-ethnic relations in any country.

After the initial drop in the number of ethnic Albanians in secondary education in the early 1990s, measures were instituted to improve the situation, but the issue of higher education in Albanian was left unaddressed. When the University of Tetovo was first established in December 1994, the government initially reacted with force to close it, inflicting casualties to the protestors in the process. Concessions came after this show of force: an ethnic quota was established for all national minorities regarding enrollment in the two state universities in Skopje and Bitola. Also, the Faculty of Pedagogy in Skopje established instruction in Albanian and Turkish. While these measures led to higher enrollment rates at the tertiary level for all ethnic minorities, they did not satisfy the requirements for recognition and state funding of Tetovo University. That requirement was very important for ethnic Albanians, both on the symbolic and material level. This illegal university was tolerated from 1995 until 2004, when it was finally recognized and granted state funding. The path to the type of recognition that Tetovo University gained in 2004 (full recognition of monolingual education in Albanian with one class for studying the Macedonian language), was paved by the Ohrid Framework Agreement (OFA) in 2001. In 1995 such recognition was highly unlikely, since at that time the Albanian language was not an official language on the central level. The wisest thing that could be done at that time was to start complex negotiations with ethnic Albanian political representatives and the leadership of the university aimed at introducing bilingual instruction in Albanian and Macedonian at the University of Tetovo. In that way the requirement for education in Albanian would be fulfilled, at the same time enabling students to learn the Macedonian language and use it in their work on any level of public and private employment in the country. In addition, in these negotiations the ethnic Macedonian side could have insisted on introducing high educational standards, as well as the inclusion of programmes on inter-ethnic tolerance and peaceful conflict resolution in the curricula’s of the university (as well as in the other two state universities). The establishment of the private not-for-profit South-East European University in Tetovo, which is trilingual (Albanian, Macedonian and English) and implements all of the
The consequence of not taking such measures as early as 1994-1995, was that Tetovo University became a reservoir of political radicalism and a main point in the political platforms of all of the ethnic Albanian political parties. The moderate ethnic Albanian party PDP, part of the governing coalition from 1992 to 1998, lost much of its support in favour of the DPA, a more radical right-wing ethnic Albanian party because one of the main points of DPA’s 1998 program was the legalisation and state funding of Tetovo University. When the DPA failed to deliver this platform promise, this issue became one of the rallying points for an even more radical ethnic Albanian political party, the DUI, (established by former insurgents from the National Liberation Army, or NLA). DUI finally managed to pressure their ethnic Macedonian coalition partner in the government into passing a law recognizing and financing Tetovo University in 2004.

This example highlights the short-sighted management of ethnic conflict in this period consisted of combining small concessions, use of force, and turning a blind eye to ethnic issues problems instead of solving them. These governmental missteps led to the increasing radicalization of ethnic Albanians in Macedonia. This is especially true in the case of higher education, since, if the government tackled the problem as proposed above, educated ethnic Albanians at Tetovo University may well have had a more moderate attitude towards the state and towards ethnic Macedonians. In addition, ethnic Albanians would likely have gained better quality qualifications to enhance their access to employment in public administration and the private sector. In that way, the problem of having a deficit of university-educated ethnic Albanians (vital for increasing their representation in public administration) would have been addressed in a positive fashion. Needless to say, a high quality education, in which individuals experience inter-ethnic tolerance and peaceful conflict resolution, is one of the best and most important long-term investments in the stability of future inter-ethnic relations that a multi-ethnic country can make.

A very important trait of ethnic conflict management in Macedonia is that of corrupt exchange between ethnic elites, since “between consent and force stands corruption/fraud (which is characteristic of certain situations when it is hard to exercise the hegemonic function, and when the use of force is too risky).”

10 Antonio Gramsci, as cited in Robert Hislope, “When Being Bad is Good: Corrupt Exchange in Divided Societies”, (Conference paper: “Postcommunist States and Societies: Transnational and National Politics,” Maxwell School of Syracuse University, September 30- October 1, 2005), www.maxwell.syr.edu/moynihan/programs/ces/pconfpdfs/Hislope.pdf, p.1

11 Robert Hislope, “When Being Bad is Good: Corrupt Exchange in Divided Societies”, (Conference paper: “Postcommunist States and Societies: Transnational and National Politics,” Maxwell School of Syracuse University, September 30- October 1, 2005), www.maxwell.syr.edu/moynihan/programs/ces/pconfpdfs/Hislope.pdf, p.3
pragmatic approach upon taking office.”

In his studies and field research of corruption in Macedonia and its influence on inter-ethnic relations, Robert Hislope convincingly shows the connection between corrupt exchange among ethnic elites and the stability of the multi-ethnic coalitions governing the country from 1992 until 2001.

However, while corrupt exchange was one of the elements that helped “to glue together” the multi-ethnic coalitions until 2001, its consequences were disastrous for the institutions and their democratic development, and for the rule of law in the country. It is no coincidence that the first clashes in 2001 between ethnic Albanian fighters and the Macedonian national security forces occurred in villages left for years without the presence of police or border patrols, thereby allowing a “safe haven” for cigarettes, oil, drugs and arms smugglers. Accusations of negligence toward internal security were numerous, beginning from the economic blockade to the north (UN sanctions against Yugoslavia), and south (the embargo against Macedonia from Greece). Indeed, one veteran of the Ministry of Interior of Macedonia (and Minister of Interior from 1998 to 1999), Pavle Trajanov, blames consequent Macedonian governments from the time of the “double embargo” in 1992 until today, for organizing or tolerating the smuggling of cigarettes, oil and arms from Macedonia to Kosovo and Serbia.

Certainly, there were other factors that steered the ethnic elites in Macedonia towards cohabitation. Hislope correctly notes that, “while the Macedonian political class was capable of a show of force, it was not prepared to commit credibly to a coercive strategy” because of the “weakness of the state, the insecure and precarious regional conditions, and the sheer size and disruptive potential of the Albanian minority”. On the other hand, for ethnic Albanians “the exit options in the early 1990s all looked dreadful”, since Kosovo was “under the brutal subjugation of Milosevic, and Albania was preoccupied with recovery from its severe communist experience”. As Nevzat Halili, a politician from the PDP has stated that “Albanians in Macedonia enjoyed political pluralism and faced none of the repressive measures inflicted on the Kosovars”. Therefore, “with the costs of repression too high for Macedonians, and the price of exit too great for Albanians, peace was maintained by Macedonian and Albanian elites mutually adjusting the terms of their partnerships.”

(b) Military, paramilitary and state intelligence agencies

The Macedonian Army was constructed from the returning soldiers and officers of the Yugoslav Peoples Army (YPA) that were Macedonian citizens. The latter left Macedonia peacefully in April 1992, taking with it all of the weapons and several radars from the barracks in Macedonia. In the period before the departure of the Yugoslav Peoples Army, Macedonian police and state intelligence officials (under the command of the Republic’s leadership) captured all of the lists for drafting Macedonian soldiers from...

12 Ibid p.17
15 Hislope, “When being bad is good … “ p.35-36
the YPA documentation, in order to prevent the YPA from drafting and sending Macedonian troops to the developing conflict zones in Slovenia and Croatia.

The Macedonian security forces under the command of the Republic had also prepared a plan for organizing civil disobedience and, at a latter phase armed rebellion (code name “Blue bird”), in the case the YPA organized a coup d’état in Macedonia.

During the 1990s there were several reports of the organization of Albanian paramilitary groups in Macedonia (see Appendix I), while the ethnic Albanian National Liberation Army that fought the Macedonian Security forces in 2001 was formed in the fall of 1999.

(c) Civilians

Civil society initiatives and organizations have been “ethnically divided from the very beginning and the strategy of the international donors for achieving real inter ethnic cooperation between non-governmental organizations in Macedonia did not significantly change or improve this situation.”

(d) Intellectuals

The overall ethnic division of Macedonian society did not circumvent the intellectuals. Their proposals have often been inspired by their ethnic rather than their “civic” affiliation. Certainly, there have been several exclusions from this rule, but none of them have gained significant public support.

(e) National majorities (“peoples of the republic”), their interrelations and clashes, and victimization of minorities for the ‘national cause’

Ethnic conflict between the majority ethnic Macedonian population and the minority of ethnic Albanians has been described throughout the report. The other ethnic groups in Macedonia have generally kept out of this conflict. The political representatives of these “smaller ethnic groups” have continuously participated in multi-ethnic governing coalitions since Macedonia’s independence.

(f) National minorities proportion in relation to the whole population

Historically, in addition to ethnic Macedonians, Macedonia has been inhabited by Albanians, Turks, Vlachs, Serbs, Roma and other ethnic groups. Table 2 depicts the ethnic composition of the Macedonia based on the official census figures from 1953 until the last census in 2002.

Table 2. Ethnic structure of the Republic of Macedonia, Censuses 1953-2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,304,514</td>
<td>1,406,003</td>
<td>1,647,308</td>
<td>1,909,136</td>
<td>2,033,964</td>
<td>1,945,932</td>
<td>2,022,547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macedonian</td>
<td>860,699</td>
<td>1,000,854</td>
<td>1,142,375</td>
<td>1,279,323</td>
<td>1,328,187</td>
<td>1,295,964</td>
<td>1,297,981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albanian</td>
<td>162,524</td>
<td>183,108</td>
<td>279,871</td>
<td>377,208</td>
<td>441,987</td>
<td>441,104</td>
<td>509,083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vlach</td>
<td>8,668</td>
<td>8,046</td>
<td>7,190</td>
<td>6,384</td>
<td>7,764</td>
<td>8,601</td>
<td>9,695</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roma</td>
<td>20,462</td>
<td>20,606</td>
<td>24,505</td>
<td>43,125</td>
<td>52,103</td>
<td>43,707</td>
<td>53,879</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16 Personal interview with Prof. Dr. Gjorge Ivanov, civil society expert and activist, Skopje, December 2006.
The census figures clearly show that ethnic Albanians comprise the largest minority ethnic group in Macedonia. In nearly 50 years, their percentage in the overall population has doubled (from 12.4% in 1953 to 25.17% in 2002), due to their high birth rate and migration flows into Macedonia. The Turkish population decreased drastically in this period, due to the Yugoslav-Turkish agreement for the transfer of the Turkish population from Yugoslavia to Turkey in the 1950s. The Roma population has also doubled its size in absolute numbers during the observed period, mostly due to their high birth rate. In addition, as the emancipation of Roma gained momentum and the protection and respect of their rights was increasing, members of this ethnic group had progressively declared themselves as Roma on official censuses - not as Albanians, Turks, or Macedonians, as had often been the case in the past. All of the other ethnic groups show a more stable demographic continuity.

The cultural characteristics of the ethnic groups in Macedonia are varied. Ethnic Macedonians, Vlachs and Serbs are predominantly Orthodox Christians, whereas the Albanians, Turks and Roma are predominantly Muslim. While the ethnic Macedonians and Serbs belong to the South-Slavic group, ethnic Albanians, Turks, Vlachs and Roma are of non-Slavic origin. Each of these ethnic groups has its own language. In that sense, all of the classic cultural cleavages between ethnic groups exist in Macedonia.

Macedonia also features territorial concentration of certain ethnicities. Ethnic Albanians predominantly live in the western and northwestern part of the state, along the borders with Albania and Kosovo, mostly in the cities and surrounding countryside of Tetovo, Skopje, Kumanovo, Gostivar, Kicevo, Struga and Debar. Ethnic Turks are mostly concentrated in the region around the city of Gostivar and the Municipality of Plasnica, both in Western Macedonia. While Roma can be found all over the country, their biggest concentration is in the municipality of Suto Orizari, near the capital city, Skopje, where they constitute an absolute majority and have their own Roma mayor. Although Vlachs and Serbs live throughout the country, the highest territorial concentration of Serbs is in the municipality of Cucer Sandevo, on the northern border of Macedonia, while the highest concentration of Vlachs is in the Krusevo municipality in southwest Macedonia. See Appendix II for a visual presentation of the territorial concentration of ethnic Macedonians, Albanians and Turks.

h) Ethno-mobilization and age-groups

While there has not been any research on this question in Macedonia in the early period of Macedonia’s independence, the following case study can be indicative of the level of ethnic mobilization and use of violence as a method for achieving political goals among young ethnic Macedonians and ethnic Albanians. An UNDP survey in 2001 (just before the start of the armed conflict in Macedonia) showed that 60 percent of young Albanian male respondents (aged 18 to 24) found violence an acceptable political practice, while for the same group among the ethnic Macedonians, this figure was 16.4 percent.\(^{17}\) If we consider that “young Albanian men express a willingness to

use violence for political ends (60 percent), that they mistrust the Macedonian state and especially the Macedonian police, and that they face a blighted economic future, we can began to appreciate the attraction of paramilitary recruitment.”

Within this same UNDP survey, done just one month before the start of the violent clashes between the ethnic Albanian fighters and the Macedonian security forces, suggested that economic hardship was the most important problem confronting the nation at that time. Specifically, the UNDP ranked the problems as follows: unemployment (70.4 percent), low salaries (61.7 percent), poverty (59.2 percent), high prices (50.2 percent), crime (48.7 percent), corruption (46.9 percent), health (40.9 percent), instability in the region (38.3 percent), and ethnic problems (37.6 percent). This is another indicative argument in support of the analysis of the conflict in 2001 and its inter-dependence with the situation in Kosovo.

1.3. Fears as Factors of Ethno-Mobilization

The following factors of fear will be analyzed: problematic group history, demography and contested identity of ethnic Macedonians. The first two factors will be analyzed within this chapter, while the issue of the contested identity of ethnic Macedonians will be dealt with in Chapter 4.

1.3.1. Problematic group history

In order to trace the roots of present day collective fears and mistrust between ethnic Macedonians and ethnic Albanians, one must at least go back to the events and allegiances in World War II (WWII). After the Yugoslav Army surrendered in 1941, eastern and central Macedonia (predominantly populated by ethnic Macedonians) came under Bulgarian rule, while the western part (inhabited by Albanians, Turks and Macedonians, but with the largest concentration of Albanians) fell to Italian rule. During the war years, ethnic Macedonians concentrated their battle for liberation in the partisan movement under the leadership of Josip Broz-Tito. In the case of ethnic Macedonians, at the beginning of WWII, there were no ideological alternatives relative to the national liberation path, unlike in the other ex-Yugoslav countries. The ideological split in the Macedonian national liberation movement came at the end of the war. On the other hand, during the War, ethnic Albanians had the alternative of joining the pro-fascist Bali Kombetar movement fighting for “Greater Albania”. Indeed, between 1941 and 1944, under Italian and German rule, Kosovo and the western part of Macedonia were annexed by the Albanian state, while the remaining part of today’s Republic of Macedonia came under control of Bulgaria, then allied with Nazi Germany. After the surrender of Italy, western Macedonia was occupied by the German Army and in 1944, the Bali Kombetar forces were organized into the “SS Skenderbeg Division”. These forces were infamous for their brutality against the Orthodox population, Jews and Roma. There are reports, whose validity cannot be independently verified, that the overwhelming majority of ethnic Albanians from Macedonia joined the Bali Kombetar (500 ethnic Albanian partisans vs. 15,000 members of Bali Kombetar)19. In any case, Bali Kombetar was active in Western

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18 Hislope, “Between a bad peace and a good war ...”, p.137
Macedonia during WWII and for several years afterwards. They were reportedly finally defeated in 1953.20

Throughout the existence of SFRY, although the ethnic Albanian population living in the federation was larger than Macedonians, Slovenians or Montenegrins, ethnic Albanians were the only ones without their own federal republic. In November 1968, large scale demonstrations took place in Kosovo, with ethnic Albanians calling the Yugoslav authorities to grant the province the status of a republic, the seventh republic in the Yugoslav federation. These demonstrations were mirrored in Macedonia, in the city of Tetovo, where ethnic Albanians demanded joining Albanian populated areas of Macedonia to Kosovo in a seventh republic. Arben Xhaferi, who in 1997 became the leader of the Democratic Party of Albanians (DPA) in Macedonia, participated in these protests as a 20 year-old student. Later, as the leader of the DPA party, he frequently called for the self-determination of ethnic Albanians in Macedonia and unification with Albania and/or Kosovo.21 Based on these considerations and the legacies from WWII, it can be argued that ethnic Macedonians fear that ethnic Albanian demands, no matter if they are presented as “struggle for human rights” or “decentralization and self-government”, are ultimately aimed at territorial secession and the formation of a “Greater Albania” or “Greater Kosovo”.22

1.3.2. Demography

Another source of ethnic Macedonian’s collective fear is that even if ethnic Albanians do not secede from Macedonia, ethnic Macedonians will eventually become a minority by “demographic swamping”, due to the high reproduction rate of the ethnic Albanian population and migrations from Kosovo.

After the Macedonian capital Skopje was devastated by a massive earthquake in 1963, its rebuilding and reconstruction required a large labor force. This was an opportunity for workers from Kosovo to engage in the rebuilding activities. After the earthquake, Skopje was declared an “open city”; a residence permit in the city was easily acquired. These events led to a wave of immigration of ethnic Albanians from Kosovo. The second wave of immigration from Kosovo came in the late 1980s as a result of repression in the province by the Milosevic regime. The claimed demographic fears came to a boiling point in 1999 when in the midst of the NATO attacks on Serbia, approximately 360,000 refugees from Kosovo (out of which the overwhelming number where ethnic Albanians) came to Macedonia.23 In the last case, any fears were
unfounded, since the ethnic Albanian refugees returned to Kosovo after the NATO attacks ended. However, ethnic Macedonians nearly always make a distinction between the ethnic Albanians who have lived in the Macedonian territory for centuries, and newcomers from Kosovo who came in the last forty years. The former group is usually regarded as “peaceful and integrated into society”, while the latter are labeled as “carrying the frustrations from Kosovo and Milosevic”, thus being hostile towards Slavs.

1.3.3. The Vicious Circle of Fears

Based on the discussion above, let us examine how a vicious circle of fears forms, no matter what solution is advocated for inter-ethnic relations. If the solution is federalization or partition of the country (as proposed by the former Prime Minister Georgievski and DPA leader Xhaferi), the fear it triggers is that the “predator neighbours”, in a “new Berlin Congress”, would divide and absorb the Macedonian ethno-nation, while ethnic Albanians would join “Greater Kosovo” or “Greater Albania.”

On the other hand, if the solution is a unitary state, as is the growing consensus after the Ohrid Framework Agreement, the fear is that the demographic expansion of the ethnic Albanians will eventually result in that ethnic Macedonians will become a “minority in their own country.”

1.4. Ethnic Groups Considered as Minorities

The Macedonian legal and political system does not use the term “minority.” Instead, in the Preamble of the Constitution it uses the formula “citizens living within its borders who are part of the Albanian people, the Turkish people, the Vlach people, the Serbian people, the Romany people, the Bosniac people and others ...” while throughout the Constitutional text and in the entire legislation the definition “communities not in the majority in the population of Macedonia” is used as Macedonia’s concept of what is elsewhere defined as “national minority.”

1.4.1. Definition and comment of understanding of minority and differentiation criteria

The definition of a national minority offered in this report is “a group of people belonging to a particular ethnic group/religion which represents less than 50% of the total population.” In a contrast with national minorities, religious, language, social, immigrant and other types of minorities can be consisted of members of different
ethnic groups.

Under the 1974 Yugoslav Constitution, populations were ranked according to a three-tier system. The first tier consisted of “nations”, which had their own republics within the SFRY; the second included groups of “nationalities” that had kin-states outside the SFRY; and the third incorporated “ethnic groups” that had neither of these, but were ethnically distinct. The Preamble of the 1974 Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia defined the country as “the national state of the Macedonian nation and state of the Albanian and Turk nationalities”. On the other hand, the preamble of the 1991 Constitution of Republic of Macedonia, declared it a “historical fact that Macedonia is established as a national state of the Macedonian people, in which full equality as citizens and permanent co-existence with the Macedonian people is provided for Albanians, Turks, Vlachs, Romas and other nationalities living in the Republic of Macedonia.”

After the OFA amendments from 2001, the Macedonian Constitution uses the term communities for all ethnic groups, while it uses the formula of “communities not in the majority in the population of Macedonia” as an indirect definition of national minorities.

1.4.2. Changes that the dissolution of former Yugoslavia brought for the status of each ethnic group/minority

Apart from the constitutional changes that affected the status (predominantly on the symbolic level) of the ethnic Albanians and ethnic Turks, Albanians have often protested against two new circumstances brought by the dissolution of SFRY:

- that the new international border between Macedonia and Serbia (including Kosovo) was impeding their mobility with their co-nationals in Kosovo and;
- that the citizenship condition of 15 year residence in Macedonia was harsh and disqualifying for many Albanians that had migrated to Macedonia during the 1980s and 1990s. In 2004 this requirement was lowered to 8 years of residence.

The status of other minorities living in Macedonia did not change with the dissolution of the SFRY. Ethnic conflict in Macedonia is based on the Macedonian-Albanian ethnic divide. The other ethnic groups have, in principle, kept out of this conflict.

1.4.3. Other particularly vulnerable groups

Roma’s are traditionally the population that is most vulnerable to discrimination, and this is a persistent situation both during SFRY and after Macedonia’s independence.

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29 Marko, “The Referendum for Decentralization in Macedonia ... “, p.3
2. Ethno-Mobilization and Violence

2.1. Objective Requirements for the Process of Ethno-Mobilization

2.1.1. The global changes of economic and political systems

Macedonia has experienced severe economic hardships from the beginning of its independence until today. These hardships were essentially caused by three factors:

a) From 1992 until 1995, land-locked Macedonia was under a blockade from the south and the north. The UN-imposed sanctions on FR Yugoslavia meant the loss of traditional trading partners for Macedonian businesses, while the series of punitive measures imposed from Greece, which included a border blockade, in order to pressure Macedonia to change its constitutional name and flag, resulted in a crisis regarding oil supplies and other goods from the south. As a result of this twin blockade, the GDP dropped by 50 per cent from 1992-1995. The UN estimates that the Macedonian economy suffered a loss of $4 billion in income.31

b) Most of Macedonia’s production and trade was tied both technologically and as a market to the ex-Yugoslav republics. With the introduction of new borders, tariffs and customs, in addition to the embargo towards Serbia and Montenegro, the Macedonian economy shrunk considerably. During the transition period, the GDP share by the industry fell considerably, from around 45 percent in the early 1990s to around 26 percent in 2004.32

c) The privatization model that was chosen, the so called “managerial buy-out” produced unsatisfactory economic results and it was overburdened by corruption.

2.1.2. The collapse of the economic system/breakdown of the self-management system and other socio-economic circumstances

Ethnic Macedonians, Serbs and Vlachs were over-represented in public administration and in “socially owned enterprises” when the transition period started and therefore, they had better chances to take advantage of the privatization of these enterprises, while the other ethnic groups were proportionately more represented in the private

31 Robert Hislope, “Between a bad peace and a good war: insights and lessons form the almost-war in Macedonia”, (Ethnic and Racial Studies Vol. 26 No. 1 January 2003); p. 136
However, due to the reasons described in Chapter 2, the harsh years of transition affected all of the ethnic groups in a similar way.

The Macedonian State Statistical Office distinguishes the unemployed population as economically active - job seekers and on leave, and economically inactive - not looking for a job and too young or old to work. Table 3 shows the ethnic breakdown of the two categories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>Economically active but unemployed</th>
<th>Economically inactive</th>
<th>Percentage in total population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>283132</td>
<td>833325</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macedonians</td>
<td>64.5</td>
<td>59.4</td>
<td>64.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albanians</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>25.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turks</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roma</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vlachs</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbs</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bosniaks</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: State Statistical Office

This data shows that the percentage of persons that are economically active, but unemployed closely matches the percentage of that ethnic group (except for Roma) in the overall population, indicating the similarly difficult economic situation that all of them are facing. The UNDP Early Warning Report from 2001 confirms this situation - “the unemployment rate among the ethnic groups in Macedonia was approximately proportional to the respective percentages of the ethnic groups in the total population. The one exception was the Roma ethnic group, which had an unemployment rate that was twice their percentage share of the total population.”

The data presented shows that there are no elements of ethnic discrimination in the economic status of different ethnic groups in Macedonia, except for the Roma. This data, together with the UNDP opinion polls from 2001 is indeed very important for the proper analysis of the Macedonian ethnic conflict.

2.2. Ethno-Mobilization and Violence

While there are emerging analyses, mainly done by foreign researchers and scholars, the majority of the Macedonian general public and academic circles appear to be puzzled, asking the question: “What happened to Macedonia in 2001?”. There are two dominant (and contending) explanations:

- The violent conflict was essentially an **aggression** from Kosovo and a spill-over effect from the battles fought by ethnic Albanians in Kosovo and Southern Serbia. The triggering event was the signing and ratification of a border treaty between Macedonia and Yugoslavia, internationally legitimizing the Yugoslav-Macedonian border, including the border between Kosovo and Macedonia. In 2001, this agreement was not recognized by the Kosovo Provisional Government, claiming that any agreement regarding borders must be negotiated with Pristina, not Belgrade.

- The violent conflict was exclusively the result of internal factors. It was a **domestic rebellion** resulting from the repression and discrimination of the Albanian population in Macedonia.

I would argue that the best exegesis lies in the middle, as often is the case when such mutually exclusive explanations of a single phenomenon exist. It is true that the constitutional status of ethnic Albanians was downgraded by the 1991 Constitution. It is also true that ethnic Macedonian politicians were short-sighted in their ethnic conflict management and “avoided complex negotiations, pacts or consociational arrangements in this period.” Macedonian political elites did not accept the idea of reaching a “historic agreement with the Albanians”, as Vasil Tupurkovski suggested as early as 1994. Although the number of ethnic Albanians employed in public administration increased five times from 1990 until 2000, they were and still are underrepresented. Given the low educational level of the ethnic Albanian population (which is connected with the previously analyzed problem of higher education in Albanian language), there are/were not enough qualified Albanians to achieve ethnic parity in the public administration. Still, it is also true that without weapons smuggled from Albania in 1997 and from Kosovo after 1999, without organizational and logistical support from Kosovo, and with unrestricted crossings of the Macedonian-Kosovo border, the armed conflict in 2001 could not have occurred. However, once the conflict started, organizational and logistical support alone from Kosovo would not have achieved the effect it did if ethnic Albanians within Macedonia did not also join the insurgency, since “organization cannot lead where sentiment will not go.”


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36 Marko, “The Referendum for Decentralization in Macedonia ... ”, p.9
37 Even if all of the ethnic Albanians with higher education were employed in the public administration across Macedonia in 2001, Albanian representation would only increase from 10.2 percent to 10.7 percent. See: European Stability Initiative, “Ahmeti’s Village: The Political Economy Of Interethnic Relations In Macedonia”, (ESI Skopje and Berlin 2002), http://www.esiweb.org/index.php?lang=en&eid=1566&document_ID=36p.28
Crisis at that stage was clearly imported from Kosovo." 39 The second stage stretched from early April through mid August 2001. In that period, domestic ethnic Albanian fighters emerged and joined the insurgency40. Therefore, the 2001 conflict could be defined as an ethnic Albanian insurgency in Macedonia, led by the NLA and initially sparked from Kosovo.

Three trends must be noted and analysed in the progression of the violent conflict in Macedonia in 2001:

- As the conflict progressed, more of the domestic ethnic Albanian population joined the insurgency.
- The initial statements and communiqués from the NLA spoke about “targeting the uniform of the Macedonian occupier until the Albanian people are freed.” 41 However, in the next phase they were contradictory, confusing messages from official NLA communiqués and commanders’ statements. One said that “we do not want to endanger Macedonia’s stability and integrity, but we will fight a guerrilla war until we have won our basic rights, until we are accepted as equal people in Macedonia” 42, while the other simultaneously stated they were fighting for an “independent, separate Albanian state of Western Macedonia.” 43 In the final stage of the conflict, the NLA’s rhetoric became more cohesive and coherent. It reverted to what one NLA commander formulated earlier, “Albanians to be considered as equal to Macedonians, Albanian to be recognized as an official language, [have] the right of higher education in Albanian language, [see] changes in the Constitution that guarantee equal status and treatment and a new census observed by international institutions to guarantee the legitimacy of the numbers,” 44 Although there were still evident divisions among NLA fighters regarding their goals, the latter position was most prevalent by the final stages of the conflict.
- Thirdly, as the conflict progressed and increasing numbers of ethnic Albanians from Macedonia joined the insurgency, the international community changed their rhetoric. Initially labelling the NLA, as Lord Robertson, NATO Secretary-General did in May 2001, as “a bunch of murderous thugs whose objective is to destroy a democratic Macedonia and who are using civilians as human shields” in a cynical bid to provoke “another Balkan bloodbath” 45, the tone moderated to

40 The Chief of General Staff of the Army of the Republic of Macedonia in 2001, Pande Petrovski claimed in a TV interview (Kanal 5 TV, 16 May 2006) that domestic ethnic Albanians joined the insurgency in May 2001. Nevertheless, both sources recognize that in the first month, the violent conflict did not involve ethnic Albanians from Macedonia, but from Kosovo.
43 “Albanian guerrillas vow to fight for rights: Macedonia’s president met with President Bush yesterday to ask for help with peacebuilding”, (The Christian Science Monitor, May 3, 2001)
44 Juliette Terzieff, Macedonia: inside a rebel camp, (Newsweek, April 27, 2001), <http://listserv.buffalo.edu/cgi-bin/wa?A2=ind0104d&L=makedon&T=0&P=5800>
45 “Macedonia on a brink of ‘abyss’”, (BBC News, May 7 2001), http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/1317049.stm
the less inflammatory terms of “rebels, guerrilla, ethnic Albanian forces”. Also, as the conflict progressed and violence grew in intensity, the international community increasingly insisted there could be no military solution to the conflict.

When the armed conflict flared at the end of February 2001, the governing coalition consisted of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization- Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity (VMRO-DPMNE)\(^{46}\), an ethnic Macedonian right-wing party, and the DPA, an ethnic Albanian right-wing party. The main opposition party was the Social-Democratic Union of Macedonia (SDSM)\(^{47}\), a predominately ethnic Macedonian social-democratic party, and the PDP, a moderate ethnic Albanian party. The President of Macedonia, originally a candidate from VMRO-DPMNE and a moderate politician seeking peaceful solutions, was the key domestic figure in the negotiations for the conflict settlement. In May 2001, these four parties joined in a grand coalition government or “government of national unity” bowing to strong international pressure. On August 13, 2001, the four parties together with President Boris Trajkovski and the international mediators, Special Representative of the EU in Macedonia, Francois Leotard, and US Special Envoy James Perdew, signed the Ohrid Framework Agreement (OFA), the basic conflict settlement document.

After initial hesitation regarding how to react to the crisis, the positions of the main political factors in Macedonia became clear: VMRO-DPMNE (especially its leader, Prime Minister Ljubco Georgievski, as well as hard-line Minister of Interior Ljube Boskovski) favoured a military solution to the conflict, and even advocated proclaiming a state of war in Macedonia. Later, after immense pressure from the international community, VMRO-DPMNE participated in the Ohrid negotiations and signed the OFA. The DPA called on their partners in the government to exercise restraint in dealing with the insurgents, and did not leave the governing coalition even when Macedonian security forces made large-scale offensives against the insurgents in different parts of northwest Macedonia.

In May 2001, the DPA together with the PDP signed an agreement with the leader of the NLA, Ali Ahmeti, in Prizren, Kosovo. The agreement, brokered by the American OSCE diplomat in Skopje, Robert Frowick, stated that the two Albanian parties and the NLA shared a common political platform aimed at changes in the state constitution, recognition of the Albanian language as the second official language, proportional representation for the ethnic Albanians in state institutions, and increased local autonomy. The deal also demanded “amnesty for NLA fighters in return for a cease-fire”, and an “NLA right to veto decisions regarding ethnic Albanian rights”. The document stated that there was no military solution to the conflict and promised to preserve the territorial integrity of the state.

In the initial phases of the conflict, the SDSM called on the government and its security forces to act decisively against the “Albanian terrorists” (this term was nearly always used by all of the Macedonian politicians and the Macedonian media, as well as by representatives of the international community in the early stages of the conflict). Once a part of the grand coalition, the SDSM shifted to more moderate positions, and fully participated in the negotiations leading to the OFA.

\(^{46}\) Acronym in Macedonian.  
\(^{47}\) Acronym in Macedonian.
3. The Settlement and After

3.1. Conflict Settlement

The Ohrid Framework Agreement (OFA) was signed on 13 August 2001 by the four biggest ethnic Macedonian and ethnic Albanian political parties and the two “facilitators” - Mr. James Perdew, USA special envoy and Mr. Francocis Leotard, EU envoy to Macedonia. The OFA was consisted of the following points:

3.1.1. Basic principles

The basic settlement principles were the rejection of the use of violence as political means, reaffirmation of the sovereignty, integrity and unitary character of the Macedonian state, preservation and reflection of the multi-ethnic character of the country in its public life and commitment to enhancing the local self-government.

3.1.2. Development of decentralized government

The settlement included enhanced competencies in the areas of public services, urban and rural planning, environmental protection, local economic development, culture, local finances, education, social welfare and health care, and the revision of municipal boundaries under international supervision and election of local heads of police by municipal councils from lists of candidates proposed by the Ministry of Interior.

3.1.3. Non-discrimination and equitable representation

Provisions included the principle of non-discrimination and equal treatment of all under the law, measures to assure equitable representation of communities in all central and local public bodies and at all levels of employment, election of one-third of the members of the Constitutional Court, three members of the Judicial Council as well as the Public Attorney by a special parliamentary procedure that came to be know as “Badinter majority” [majority of the total number of representatives in the Parliament that includes a majority of the total number of representatives claiming to belong to the communities not in the majority in the population of Macedonia].

3.1.4. Special parliamentary procedures

These procedures, i.e the “Badinter majority” are to be used for adopting a number of Constitutional amendments, the Law on Local Self-Government as well as laws that directly affect culture, use of language, education, personal documentation, use of symbols, laws on local finances, local elections, the city of Skopje, and boundaries of municipalities.

3.1.5. Education and use of languages

State funding for university level education in languages spoken by at least 20 percent of the population of Macedonia was mandated alongside the principle of “positive discrimination” in the enrolment at State universities of candidates “belonging to
communities not in the majority in the population of Macedonia.” Regarding the use of languages, any language spoken by at least 20 percent of the population is also an official language in Macedonia which can be used in: a) municipalities where at least 20 percent of the population speaks that language; b) in communication with a main office of the central government and c) regional office of the central government if it is located in “a unit of local self-government in which at least 20 percent of the population speaks an official language other than Macedonian”.

3.1.6. Expression of identity

Next to the emblem of the Republic of Macedonia, local authorities will be free to place on front of local public buildings emblems marking the identity of the majority community in the municipality.

3.1.7. Implementation

Timetables were developed for the adoption of the necessary constitutional and legislative amendments, which were annexed to the OFA and an invitation to the international community “to convene at the earliest possible time a meeting of international donors that would address in particular macro-financial assistance; support for the financing of measures to be undertaken for the purpose of implementing this Framework Agreement, including measures to strengthen local self-government; and rehabilitation and reconstruction in areas affected by the fighting”.

3.1.8. Annexes

These include constitutional amendments, legislative modifications, implementation and confidence-building measures and final provisions.48 The OFA indeed represented a historic shift in the basis of the Republic. Rather than defining Macedonia as a nation state of the Macedonian people and the nationalities living in Macedonia, the new preamble now reads “Citizens of the Republic of Macedonia, the Macedonian people, as well as the citizens that live within its borders, who are part of the Albanian people, Turkish people, Vlach people, Serb people, Roma people, the Bosniak people, and others ... have decided to establish the Republic of Macedonia as an independent, sovereign state.”49 These changes did “produce the recognition of all ethnic communities and their formal equality as state and nation-building forces.”50 As a result, apart from this tectonic shift in the definition of the state, the population that “comprises at least 20% of the total population of the state” gains official recognition of its language with specific modalities regarding its use, guaranteed equitable representation at all central and local public bodies and all levels of employment, enhanced local self-government through decentralization processes, veto powers on matters involving culture, use of language, education, personal documentation, use of symbols, laws on local finances, local elections, and boundaries of municipalities, as well as state-funded university education in their mother tongue.

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49 Ibid, Annex A.
50 Marko, “The Referendum for Decentralization in Macedonia ... “, p.19
3.2. After 2001: Ethnic Conflict Not Yet Resolved

After 2001, there were two significant incidents that threatened to endanger the fragile stability of inter-ethnic relations in Macedonia. The first occurred when, according to the decentralization provisions of the OFA, municipal boundaries in Macedonia were revised in the first half of 2004. This reduced the number of municipalities from 120 to 84. The overwhelming majority of ethnic Macedonians, as well as a large number of the most renowned ethnic Macedonian intellectuals and civil society actors, opposed the revised municipal boundaries, labeling them “ethnic gerrymandering”. They accused the governing coalition of pursuing secret talks without public consultation and input or respect for the local referenda which were held against the revised municipal borders.51 The arguments of the opposing forces to the new municipal borders were that these new borders were not based on economic, geographic or administrative criteria, but instead their sole purpose was to create municipalities where ethnic Albanians would comprise more than 20%, thereby enabling them to exploit the special provisions of the OFA. The World Macedonian Congress, a pan-Macedonian diaspora organization, and the ethnic Macedonian opposition organized the collection of 150,000 signatures in order to test these municipal border revisions in a nation-wide referendum. By 23 August, 2004, 180,454 signatures had been collected; the referendum was scheduled for 7 November. The opposition campaigned with arguments that voting against the new municipalities law was not voting against the OFA or decentralization nor against Euro-Atlantic integration, but only against the manner in which the new law was negotiated and adopted. Their strategy, however, was “simply to return to the law of 1996 without developing and presenting an alternative vision for decentralization.”52

The governing coalition called upon the citizens to boycott the referendum, pursuing a campaign under the slogan: “Some questions don’t deserve an answer”. The government’s arguments were that these revisions of the municipal boundaries reflect the spirit of the OFA, and that the law must be passed if Macedonia was to proceed in its Euro-Atlantic integration. Although the international community strongly and openly backed the position of the Government, polls constantly showed that the referendum would be successful: the majority of voters would vote against the new Law on Territorial Organization.53 However on 4 November, 2004, just three days before the referendum, the USA surprisingly recognized Macedonia under its constitutional name. The referendum, held on 7 November 2004, failed because of the low turnout of 26.58%, no matter that 94.01% of that 26.58% voted against the revised municipal borders. Many connected the failure of the referendum with the recognition of the constitutional name of the country by the USA. US recognition was perceived by the voters as support for the position of the government on the municipalities law, and as American counsel of sorts not to push the country into further instability.

51 There were 41 such referendums, all resulting in rejection of the new municipal borders.
52 Marko, “The Referendum for Decentralization in Macedonia in 2004 ...”, p.26
In a second significant event, at the same time as the referendum, an ethnic Albanian armed group, under the leadership of Agim Krasniqi, occupied the village of Kondovo, now part of the City of Skopje.\(^5^4\) He did not allow Macedonian security forces to enter the area. Krasniqi was at that time indicted for robbery, illegal possession of weapons and kidnapping, all acts committed prior to the 2001 armed conflict. As a former NLA commander, he demanded amnesty and re-socialization for himself and his group of supporters. In public statements to the media, Krasniqi threatened to shell Skopje; his followers had also kidnapped and beaten four police officers. The government elected not to use force to enter the village. Instead, members of both the governing and the opposition ethnic Albanian parties went to negotiate with Krasniqi in Kondovo. After the negotiations, Krasniqi and his group “laid low” for a couple of months, re-emerging in February 2005 and occupying the village until August of that year. After repeated talks with ethnic Albanian parties in Macedonia and the indirect involvement of the Government, as well as clear pressure from the international community, Krasniqi agreed to disband his armed men controlling the village and to appear before a magistrate to face his indictments. In a seemingly inexplicable turn of events, the magistrate withdrew all national and international warrants against him in return for Krasniqi’s promise that he would report to the court regularly. This judicial decision was widely criticized by both the ethnic Macedonian opposition and President Crvenkovski. The dominant public impression was that the withdrawal of his warrants was the “price” for the political settlement of the Kondovo crisis. To date, Krasniqi has not appeared before the court and his trial is held “in absentia”, since the police stated that Krasniqi is “unavailable and unreachable to be arrested.” This is despite his regular appearances at his party’s political campaigns (the DPA) organized merely a few kilometres from the centre of Skopje. He was running for Member of Parliament in the Parliamentary Elections of 2006, on the list of DPA (in Macedonia’s proportional elections system), but his party did not win enough votes for him to enter Parliament.

The Parliamentary Elections of 2006 brought events that had the potential to destabilize inter-ethnic relations in Macedonia. The winner of the elections is the former opposition party, VMRO-DPMNE. The ethnic Albanian party DUI, in coalition with PDP, won more votes than the opposition ethnic Albanian party, the DPA. DUI/PDP was in coalition with the newly defeated SDSM (an ethnic Macedonian party). Throughout the campaign, VMRO-DPMNE repeatedly stated that “their traditional coalition partner is the DPA”. Therefore, in the post-electoral negotiations to form a government, VMRO-DPMNE first invited DPA to join the governing coalition, but also held discussions with DUI/PDP, in an attempt to include both DPA and DUI/PDP in the new government. Negotiations failed, however, partly because the DUI required a larger portion of government posts than VMRO-DPMNE was willing to give, and partly because the DPA was highly displeased with the prospect of being in the same government with their ethnic Albanian rival DUI/PDP. The international community exerted subtle pressure that the DUI/PDP should also be included in the government, as they had won the majority support in their community. VMRO-DPMNE then announced that the governing coalition would include the DPA but not the DUI (VMRO-DPMNE also invited PDP to leave its coalition with the DUI and join the government). Musa Xhaferi, a high official

of the DUI and acting Vice-President of the Government of Macedonia, stated that “the entering of the DPA in the government would represent violence towards the election results and the will of the citizens, and that could provoke protest and violence from Albanian citizens, use of force, Kalashnikovs.” After the street demonstrations and road blockades in various areas of Macedonia, organized by DUI and PDP, these two parties demanded their inclusion in the government and threatened to either leave Parliament or block laws requiring the “Badinter majority” if they are not included in the government. This has not happened so far.

Another on-going hot ethno-political debate regards the new Police Law that is in parliamentary procedure. This law envisions greater decentralization and more “citizen-friendly” functioning of the police. The DUI/PDP coalition demanded that this law should be voted with a “Badinter majority.” The Parliamentary Commission for Relations between Communities decided with a majority of votes (that included ethnic Albanian MP’s from the governing DPA party) that this law does not need to be voted with a “Badinter majority”. The latest developments in the ethnic Albanian political camps show great political polarization between the DUI/PDP and DPA parties which includes not only harsh debates in the Parliament, but also threats and even politically inspired violent incidents within the ethnic Albanian community.

Developments after the 2001 armed conflict clearly indicate that ethnic conflicts remain unresolved, since the underlying causes of the conflict have not been resolved. This was to be expected, since dealing with the underlying causes is the most difficult process. Such a process requires strong domestic political will, the consistent support of the international community, and a significant amount of time.

I argue that the “Chapter of 2001” must be successfully resolved and closed, before proceeding to the underlying causes which must be addressed in order to achieve real conflict resolution in Macedonia. Now that the requirements of the OFA have been transposed into legal acts and their implementation is well underway, there has to be gradual but continuous work on achieving equitable representation of all ethnic communities throughout the Macedonia’s public administration, as well as implementation of the planned police reforms. However, it is equally important that the perpetrators of war crimes and crimes against humanity in 2001 be brought to justice. In that sense, the cases of such alleged crimes and the responses of the international community should be analyzed. In 2002, the ICTY Prosecutor requested Macedonia to send five specific investigations and prosecutions of alleged crimes committed by the National Liberation Army (NLA) and the Macedonian forces in 2001 to the International Tribunal: 1. the “NLA Leadership” case (against the leadership of NLA, for alleged various crimes committed in 2001); 2. the “Mavrovo Road Workers” case (against the NLA, three ethnic Macedonian construction workers were kidnapped and molested, allegedly by the NLA); 3. the “Lipkovo Water Reserve” case (against the NLA, allegedly shutting down the water supply to the city of Tetovo); 4. the “Ljuboten” case (against Macedonian security forces allegedly killing 10 civilians) and 5. the “Neprošteno” case (against the NLA, for alleged crimes committed against Macedonian civilians, including a number of mass graves discovered in the village of Neprošteno). Macedonian authorities complied with the ICTY request and sent these cases on 25 November 2002. On 15 March 2005, the ICTY released an indictment against Ljube

\[55\] “Ali Ahmeti’s party resolved to enter the government at any price, DUI threatens with Kalashnikovs” (Dnevnik, 19.07.2006) [newspaper article in Macedonian language, translated by Zoran Ilievski], http://www.dnevnik.com.mk/?ItemID=3A9D3869F640C145AE753827A4CD5D0D

Boskoski and Johan Tarculovski, both suspects in the “Ljuboten” investigation. Two days later, the Macedonian authorities extradited Johan Tarculovski, a member of the security forces operating in Ljuboten. On 24 March 2005 Ljube Boskoski, former Macedonian Minister of Interior, surrendered himself to the Hague Tribunal.

On 25 April 2005 the ICTY informed that the only indictment out of the five received cases would be in the “Ljuboten” investigation. There was no ICTY indictment in the other four cases, all against members of the NLA, and they decided to return them to the Macedonian courts by the end of 2006. I would argue that this was a wrong decision. Representatives of ethnic Albanian political parties, including the leader of the former NLA, now President of the DUI party, Ali Ahmeti have repeatedly stated that they recognize the ICTY and if needed, they will stand trial in The Hague. On the other hand, they have expressed reservations regarding the impartiality of the Macedonian judiciary and have repeatedly criticized it of being unrefomed and sometimes taking “political decisions.” In such a situation there is a real possibility that the trials of former NLA members in Macedonian courts could be labelled as “political prosecutions” and the fragile stability of inter-ethnic relations could be shaken. The latest recommendations given by the International Crisis Group (ICG) warn of such a threat stating that “[t]he international community and Macedonia should lobby the Hague Tribunal to delay return of the four cases until at least late 2006 (preferably 2008) while donors work with the government to fast-track judiciary reforms, including specialized training for judges on serious crimes; crime scene investigation techniques; a viable witness protection program; and a court for serious crimes.” Furthermore, when the time for holding these trials in Macedonia comes, the international community must monitor the trials and report whether there were fair and performed completely under the law. If in a fair trial the accused are proven to be guilty and sentenced, the international community must fully assert its political influence on ethnic Albanian political factors not to take any steps that might endanger the stability of inter-ethnic relations in Macedonia.

57 Such accusation were also made recently, on 19 July 2006 by Ali Ahmeti and DUI party spokesperson Ermira Mehmeti (A1 TV News, 19:00h, 20.07.2006)
4. Third-Party Intervention

4.1. Individual State Interests (States Outside Former Yugoslavia) and their Effect on Ethno-Mobilization

The contested character of the ethnic Macedonian national identity from all neighboring countries, as well as from some radicals within Macedonia, constitutes a source of collective fear among ethnic Macedonians, and the correlated consequences on inter-ethnic relations in Macedonia. While the Republic of Bulgaria recognizes the independent Macedonian state, it does not recognize the existence of the Macedonian ethno-nation. Greece does not recognize the constitutional name of the country nor the Macedonian Orthodox Church. Serbia officially recognizes the independence of the Macedonian state and Macedonian ethno-nation, but the Serbian Orthodox Church does not recognize the Macedonian Orthodox Church. Albania does not recognize the constitutional name of the country. While Albania recognizes the Macedonian ethno-nation, it has demanded a status of a constituent nation for ethnic Albanians in Macedonia. Albanians within Macedonia do not object to the name “Republic of Macedonia”, which they regard as “being territorial, without any specific Slav connotations...” Generally, they do not openly oppose Macedonian nationalist references to antiquity. However, “it is not uncommon to hear Albanians claiming, if only to provoke their Slav neighbors, that Macedonians are nothing else but Bulgarians by origin.”60 Both Arben Xhaferi, leader of the DPA, as well as various representatives of the National Liberation Army (NLA), in interviews given to foreign media, have named ethnic Macedonians as “Slav Macedonians” which is regarded as highly offensive by ethnic Macedonians.61

To sum up, “Bulgaria is the main identity threat to the extent that identity is anchored in language; Serbs are the main identity threat to the extent that identity is anchored in religion; Albanians [are] the main identity threat to the extent that identity is anchored in statehood; and Greeks [are the main identity threat] to the extent that identity is anchored in the name of the nation, its language and state.”62 Therefore, in response to these identity threats, the newly independent Republic of Macedonia was constructed in a way that protects Macedonian ethno-national identity. While ethnic Albanians have their kin state of Albania and the “soon to be independent Kosovo”, the Republic of Macedonia has been seen by ethnic Macedonians as the only factor that could protect and nurture the Macedonian ethno-nation. The title of Kiro Gligorov’s (first President of the Republic of Macedonia) book, “Macedonia is all we have”, says it all. As Jenny Engström notes:

“... The underlying reason for the Macedonians’ unwillingness to grant the Albanians the status of constituent nation and declaring Albanian a second state

language, is directly connected with the Macedonians’ perceived need to assert their national identity vis-à-vis neighboring nations. Were Albanian demands to be met, the Macedonians fear, the territorial integrity of the Macedonian state might come under severe threat, which in turn could have disastrous consequences for the Macedonian nation."

On the other hand, ethnic Albanians in Macedonia were fearful of being repressed and treated as “second class citizens” by the Macedonian state if it is defined solely in Macedonian ethno-national terms, since they were (and still are) underrepresented in higher education and in public employment (see in more detail in the following chapter). Therefore, in order to protect the interests of their ethnic group, both on the symbolic and material levels and considering that they make up approximately one-quarter of the total population, ethnic Albanians have continuously demanded recognition as constituent people in Macedonia.

Another regional concern that can have great negative effects in terms of ethno-mobilization is the unmarked Macedonian-Kosovo border. The position of Kosovo Provisional Government’s from 2001 onwards regarding the “border dispute” was that the border agreement could not be recognized, since it was signed with Belgrade and not Pristina. Kosovo also demands alterations to the border, in order to include some border farmlands which according to the 2001 Border Agreement belong to Macedonia. Kosovo Prime Minister Ceku, in his visit to Macedonia in May 2006, stated that “demarcation was simply technical”\(^6^4\), but the border that should be demarcated “was not that negotiated between Skopje and Belgrade in 2001 and verified by the UN, but the one in place before the break-up of Yugoslavia.”\(^6^5\) It is apparent that this issue is not a “technical” but a structural and political problem of high importance. Macedonia has repeatedly appealed to the international community and to Kosovo authorities to start the demarcation of the border before the final status of Kosovo. However, these appeals have not met a positive response. Therefore, as it seems, this issue would have to be solved once Kosovo gets its final status. It is very important to find a solution for this problem that will be accepted by both sides in order to be sustainable and to contribute to the stability and security of the whole region.

4.1.1. National minorities as a concern in third-party-interference by individual states

None of the former Yugoslav republics interfered on behalf of national minorities in Macedonia. For the discourse of the relation between the war in Kosovo and the insurgency in Macedonia, see Chapter 2.

63 Engström, “The Power of Perception …”, p.16,
65 Ibid.
4.2. The Role of the “International Community” in Conflict Management until the start of Armed Violence in 2001

Various actors from the international community contributed to ethnic conflict management in Macedonia in the period from the dissolution of SFRY until the outbreak of violence in Macedonia in 2001, with varying degrees of success. Initially, the European Community (EC, later the European Union or EU) took the lead in the diplomatic efforts to resolve the crises and preserve peace in the SFRY, while the federation was slowly but surely disintegrating. These efforts were not well coordinated between the member states of the EC, resulting in ineffective diplomatic efforts. In this sense, “[t]here is a widespread opinion that evolving European institutions were still too immature for resolving such a tremendous crisis.”66

However, the EU set up a special body focused on the SFRY with legal-advisory duties, known as the Badinter Arbitration Commission (or “Badinter Commission”), for establishing and analyzing the criteria for potential recognition of the Yugoslav successor states. This commission reported to the EC in January 1992 that only Slovenia and Macedonia satisfied all of the conditions to be for EC recognition. However, the EC ignored its own Arbitration Commission, recognizing Slovenia and Croatia on 15 January 1992, despite the Commission’s opinion that Croatia did not meet all recognition conditions. Macedonia was not recognized until December 1993. The reason behind these steps was strong lobbying in favor of Croatia from some member states of the EU, and the even stronger lobbying of Greece against the recognition of Macedonia, because of the “name dispute”. One could sum up this early period as follows: “the effectiveness of the EU diplomatic steps was undermined by an imbalance of power between the member states, the lack of a common foreign and security policy, the absence of Union solidarity, and the Union’s failure to act as a neutral mediator.”67 It can be argued that this cacophony in the emerging common foreign and security policy of the EU sent signals to Macedonia that in the opinion of the international community, the future of the state and its stability were still uncertain. The insecurity about the future of the state and its territorial integrity in an ethnically divided society can certainly add fuel to radical programs across the entire ethnic spectrum.

The United Nations (UN), however, implemented a more successful action in Macedonia. For the first time in its history, the UN established preventive deployment of troops, the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force Mission (UNPREDEP), originally called UNPROFOR Macedonia Command, in Macedonia from 1992 until 1999. The initiative for this innovative preventive deployment of UN troops in Macedonia came from then President of Macedonia, Kiro Gligorov, in November 1992. The UN Security Council authorized the establishment of UNPROFOR’s presence in Macedonia by resolution S/RES/795 on 11 December 1992 as “UNPROFOR’s Macedonia Command”. The primary intention was maintenance of the United Nations presence on the republic’s borders with Albania and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Its mandate was originally defined as follows:

• monitor the border areas with Albania and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia;
• strengthen, by its presence, the country's security and stability;
• report on any developments that could threaten the country.

UN forces initially were comprised of a battalion of up to 700 in all ranks, 35 military observers, 26 civilian police monitors, 10 civil affairs staff, 45 administrative staff, and local interpreters. Subsequently, with Security Council authorization, in June 1993, the United States provided about 300 additional troops to reinforce UNPROFOR's presence. The force of approximately 1050 soldiers was composed of about 500 US troops, 350 from Finland, and smaller units from Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Indonesia. After March 1995, UNPREDEP's mandate was extended several times for further six-month periods, but finally ended in February 1999, when China vetoed the UN Security Council’s resolution for further extension of the mission. The world press, as well as foreign policy analysts, explained China’s veto as punishment for Macedonia’s recognition of Taiwan the previous month.  

The timing of UN troops’ withdrawal from the Macedonian borders was very unfortunate, since that same year there was a large influx of refugees from Kosovo into Macedonia, as well as clashes between Yugoslav security forces and the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) in a number of border areas between Kosovo and Macedonia. In the following year (2000), another ethnic Albanian army formed: the Liberation Army of Presevo, Medvedja and Bujanovac (UCPMB) which fought with Yugoslav police forces in the area of South Serbia, again very close to the border with Macedonia. During these years, as well as in 2001 when violent conflict started in Macedonia, there were numerous reports that ethnic Albanian fighters were freely moving across the borders, from Kosovo into Macedonia and vice-versa. It has been argued that if the UNPREDEP had stayed in Macedonia patrolling the borders in that period (2002-2001), there would have been, at minimum, impartial information whether military movement was going on across the border and in which direction the fighters were moving. Such intelligence would have provided a clearer picture of the situation on the ground and the possibility for the international community to act more efficiently, including developing and implementing further preventive measures against violent conflict in Macedonia.

Nevertheless, the UNPREDEP mission played a positive role in conflict management in Macedonia during its mandate. It provided not only a sense of security to the country by monitoring the borders with the two neighboring countries that were in permanent turmoil in that period, but its mission was eventually extended to “assistance in strengthening mutual dialogue among political parties and helping in monitoring human rights as well as inter-ethnic relations in the country.” As a result, the mission focused on three main pillars of its broader mandate: political action and good offices (political dimension), troop deployment (military dimension), and the human (socio-economic) dimension.

During its operations in Macedonia, the UN worked very closely with the OSCE Spillover Mission to Skopje, whose role also included monitoring and reporting.

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69 For a summary of such reports see: Hislope, “Between a bad peace and a good war …”, pp. 140-6 and “The Calm Before the Storm?...” pp. 5-9 and pp. 25-29
70 Vankovska-Cvetkovska, “UNPREDEP in Macedonia ... “ p.14
Gradually, the OSCE began to take a more active role. Max van der Stoel had an especially important part in lowering ethnic tensions and facilitating the processes for solving the “Albanian language higher education issue”. As the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, he visited Macedonia more than fifty times between 1993 and 2001, working diligently to defuse ethnic tensions. He strongly supported the adoption of a new law on higher education; his work opened the way to establishing the South East European University in Tetovo in late 2001.

In addition, from 1992 until 1996, the London Conference-mandated “Working Group,” led by Geert Ahrens, provided “timely ‘soft arbitration,’ which helped to bridge the otherwise great gaps in perspectives and policies between Macedonia’s main ethnic groups.”

From 1996 on Macedonia became eligible for funding under the EU Phare Programme; in 1998 it concluded a Cooperation Agreement with the EU, and in 2000 started negotiating for a Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA). Macedonia also joined the NATO “Partnership for Peace” (PfP) programme. Therefore, in the second part of that decade, Macedonia started to establish closer partnerships with the EU and NATO, both reassuring to the stability and integrity of the country.

Also, in the period prior to the 2001 armed conflict, the Nansen Dialogue Center, and Search for Common Ground in Macedonia, both of which are International Non Governmental Organizations (INGOs), were working in the field to establish cross-ethnic dialogue, tolerance and cooperation.

4.3. The Role of the “International Community” in Conflict Management and Settlement during and after the 2001 Conflict

The EU (and especially its High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana), NATO, the OSCE, the USA with its Special Envoy Perdew (collectively referred to in Macedonia as the “international community”), and President Boris Trajkovski were the key players in preventing the armed conflict in Macedonia from growing into a full blown civil war. The international community, compared to its previous efforts in conflict management in midst of armed violence in the Balkans, was much more efficient. There are several reasons for this. First, the “conditionality principle” imposed by the EU (which signed a SAA with Macedonia in April 2001, in midst of severe armed clashes) and NATO (which held the “carrot” of NATO membership for Macedonia) worked almost perfectly in Macedonia. There has been consistent political consensus in Macedonia for joining NATO and the EU. The public support for these processes has been amazingly high; public opinion polls have always shown over 90% public support for joining the EU, and variable but high support for joining NATO (while support for NATO fell during and after the conflict, polls from February 2006 indicate public support for joining NATO is at a historic high of 90%).

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71 Hislope, “When Being Bad is Good .. “, p.36
72 Phare is the acronym for Pologne, Hongrie Assistance à la Reconstruction Economique, originally established in 1989 to enable Poland and Hungary to transition to democracy and market economies. Later on it assisted other countries in such endeavors and related projects.
Confronted with such a situation, even the biggest “hawk” could not ignore the terms and requirements of NATO and EU, which held in their hands such desirable “carrots” (full membership). By 2001, Macedonia had reached much more advanced stages in its EU and NATO integration than in the early and mid 1990s; therefore, the state took their suggestions much more seriously than it had in the final decade of the previous century.

In addition, compared to previous engagements of the international community in Macedonia and in the wider Balkan region, their policy and actions were much more concerted and coordinated. The international community’s main agenda was to stop the violence and to pressure the Macedonian Government into dialogue on political reforms with the legal, elected representatives of the Albanian community in Macedonia. A frequently noted exception from the largely unified actions of the international community was the aforementioned mission of US diplomat and OSCE Special Envoy Robert Frowick, who organized the direct contacts between the NLA and both ethnic Albanian political parties from Macedonia. The Prizren Agreement signed between them, brokered by Frowick, was condemned by the ethnic Macedonian parties and outraged the Macedonian public. Consequently the international community joined the condemnation (even the OSCE Mission did so) as Frowick had disregarded their established principle of not negotiating with the NLA.74 Nevertheless, despite the condemnation of the Prizren Agreement by the international community and Macedonia alike, the basic provisions from this agreement were incorporated in the Framework Document presented by the international community in July 2001, and made their way into the final version of the OFA.

Ulrich Schneckener also notes discrepancies in the international coordination of crisis management in Macedonia stating that, “while EU-NATO cooperation worked relatively well, the role of the US government and, in particular, its influence on ethnic Albanian extremists remained unclear. Washington’s ambiguity served more than once as a source of irritation among Macedonian politicians as well as among European actors and, thus, threatened to undermine international crisis management.”75 Much of the international crisis management (that also included EU and NATO) in Macedonia during the armed conflict in 2001 was “a source of irritation” for Macedonian politicians and the Macedonian public, since they were seen as biased to ethnic Albanian claims.76 Additionally, the mission of US diplomat Frowick, as well as a later incident in the village of Aracinovo (where there were allegations that 17 former US military officers tutored the NLA as “instructors”)77, sparked great outrage in the Macedonian public and even in the Macedonian security forces.

The key domestic figure in the process of conflict management in 2001 was Boris Trajkovski, Macedonia’s President. Although elected as President as a candidate of VMRO-DPMNE under questionable circumstances, this ethnic Macedonian politician

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74 As a result, Ambassador Frowick was pressured into leaving Macedonia in May 2001.
with a Protestant confession, distanced himself from the nationalist standpoints of his former party leader and Prime Minister Ljubco Georgievski, and proved himself a champion of peace in Macedonia. He cooperated with all international actors, managed the peace process and chaired the negotiations leading to the OFA. In addition, he used maximal restraint when authorizing the military operations as Commander in Chief of the Army of the Republic of Macedonia (the ARM). On 8 June 2001, he announced his five-point peace plan which included putting the Macedonian security forces under a single command, isolating “the terrorists”, disarming them with the assistance of NATO, and granting amnesty to NLA, except for those who committed crimes under the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in The Hague. He also pushed for talks with representatives of ethnic Albanian political parties in Macedonia regarding the improvement of the status of the Albanian community in Macedonia.

By early July 2001, the international mediators, led by the EU-US team decided not to leave the negotiation process solely to domestic parties, but to put forward their own proposals in order to encourage progress and provide the parties with a basic document over which they could negotiate. This proposal was titled the Framework Document, developed with the assistance of Robert Badinter, the Frenchman who had led the EC Arbitration Commission in the early 1990s. As a result of his previous work wherein he advised the EC to recognize Macedonia, he was a very popular figure in the country and a wise choice by the international community. The Framework Document was a comprehensive proposal comprised of “both general principles and suggestions for solving concrete interethnic problems, including decentralization, non-discrimination in the public service, special parliamentary procedures for changing the constitution and other major laws, education and language matters as well as the expression of identity.”

This document was heavily criticized by the Prime Minister, who publicly and privately blamed Western diplomats for supporting “Albanian” (versus Macedonian) ideas. President Trajkovski insisted that the dialogue and the EU-US mediation should continue, and despite political set-backs and ongoing heavy fighting, the pace of the negotiations stepped up significantly, especially when the negotiations were transferred to be held in a lake retreat near Ohrid. The adoption of the necessary Constitutional amendments contained in the OFA, were simultaneously going on with the disarmament of the NLA by NATO Mission “Essential Harvest”. This was followed by an amnesty for all NLA fighters who did not participate in war crimes and/or crimes against humanity.

After the adoption of the provisions contained in the OFA, and the disbanding of the NLA, accompanied by an amnesty to all of the NLA members who had not committed war crimes, ethnic conflict in Macedonia moved to a new phase - one requiring that the underlying causes of the conflict be addressed. Property destroyed during the armed conflict was reconstructed with the help of the international community (especially the EU through the European Agency for Reconstruction [EAR]). Macedonia entered a period of gradually stabilizing inter-ethnic relations, despite some frustrations with the OFA on both sides. The international community was present with peacekeeping operations in Macedonia, first under NATO command, later transferred to an EU military mission through the end of 2003. The EU and the OSCE provided training for police cadets and civil servants coming from the minority ethnic

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78 Schneckener, “Developing and Applying EU Crisis Management … “, p.34
communities and employed in Macedonia’s public administration. The number of ethnic Albanians working for budget paid institutions is steadily increasing (as of August 2006, 13.8 %). The support for the OFA grew progressively from 2001 and, according to the polls from March 2006, 51% of the population supports it, while 38% oppose it.\footnote{IRI Macedonia Survey, March 2006, http://macedonia.usaid.gov/}
5. Why there was No Conflict Escalation in Macedonia during the Early Years of Yugoslavia’s Dissolution

The following factors could give an answer to the question of why Macedonia avoided violent dissolution from SFRY in the early 1990s:

- There was no significant ethnic Serbian minority on whose behalf Milosevic’s regime could make territorial demands;
- The Yugoslav People’s Army, at that time under the increasing control of Milosevic, did not attempt to perform a coup d’état in Macedonia in order to keep it in the Federation. This decision was inspired by a rational cost-benefit analysis: the YPA was already fighting on two fronts (Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina) and there was widespread belief among the leadership of the YPA, as well as the Milosevic regime that "Macedonia can not endure on its own and it will soon ask to join the federation of Serbia and Montenegro;"\(^{81}\)
- Regarding the question of why violent conflict between ethnic Macedonians and ethnic Albanians did not occur earlier, but did after the war in Kosovo: for ethnic Albanians “the exit options in the early 1990s all looked dreadful”, since Kosovo was “under the brutal subjugation of Milosevic, and Albania was preoccupied with recovery from its severe communist experience”. As Nevzat Halili, a politician from the PDP has stated, “Albanians in Macedonia enjoyed political pluralism and faced none of the repressive measures inflicted on the Kosovars.” Therefore, “with the costs of repression too high for Macedonians, and the price of exit too great for Albanians, peace was maintained by Macedonian and Albanian elites mutually adjusting the terms of their partnerships.”\(^{82}\)
- Macedonian ethno-nationalism was not only "not dominant as, for example, Croatian was in Croatia,"\(^{83}\) but was mobilized predominantly in the struggle for international recognition of the state, in lobbying for the “name dispute” with Greece and the struggle for rights of the Macedonian minority in Bulgaria, Greece and Albania.

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81 TV Interview of the first Macedonian President, Kiro Gligorov, Kanal 5 TV, Documentary: "The longest road for Macedonia" November 2006.
82 Hislope, “When being bad is good ... “ p.35-36
83 Personal interview with Dr. Zidas Daskalovski, researcher of ethnic conflict.
6. Conclusions and Recommendations

This country report has systematically examined the actors and process of ethno-mobilization and violent ethnic conflict in Macedonia from the years of the dissolution of SFRY to the present. It has presented the conflict management and settlement methods that were used in this process, with a special emphasis on the role of the “international community.” Finally, it has delineated the factors which explain why violent conflict did not occur in Macedonia during the dissolution of SFRY, but did occur a decade later, in the process of resolving the national question that SFRY did not manage to resolve during its existence- the Albanian national question. This last chapter will focus on the future and attempt to answer the question of what steps should be taken to achieve conflict resolution in Macedonia, understood as a process that “requires identifying the causal factors behind the conflict, and finding ways to deal with them.”

In order to treat the unresolved underlying causes of ethnic conflict in Macedonia, there has to be action for resolving structural and economic problems, as well as addressing the “factors of fear.” Furthermore, structural factors that need immediate attention are the demarcation of the border to Kosovo, a wide battle against corruption and organized crime and deep reforms in the judiciary and public administration.

The importance of performing deep and significant reforms in the judiciary and public administration in Macedonia cannot be overstated. Ensuring an efficient and professional administration and judiciary, free from political intrusions is crucial for the rule of law, non-discrimination and the fight against corruption. It is also the necessary precondition for improving the business climate and attracting foreign investment in Macedonia. Only by taking such measures can Macedonia start solving the biggest problem of all citizens of the country, regardless of their ethnicity - the problem of unemployment and poverty. The aid and assistance that the international community has given Macedonia to perform reforms in these fields has been valuable in the past decade, but without strong domestic political will and dedication to reforms that are often very painful, no significant or sustainable progress can be achieved.

Education is a crucial long-term investment in reconciliation and ethnic conflict resolution. Macedonia's educational system has to reinforce the values of diversity, tolerance and the cultural benefits of living in such a multi-cultural society. Apart from learning about each other's culture, the education system should provide students with the possibility for elective classes in minority languages and at the same time, it should improve the quality of training in the Macedonian language for students from other ethnic communities who have their mother tongue as language of instruction.

A crucial contribution to addressing the fears of the majority in Macedonia would be the recognition of the country under its constitutional name by the wider international community, and especially EU member states. There can be no better proof for the perception of security and sustainability of the state that such an act can provoke than the consequences of the recognition by the USA in the referendum of

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85 In the IRI Macedonia Survey, March 2006, http://macedonia.usaid.gov/, 52% of the citizens stated that unemployment is the most serious problem which Macedonia is facing today.
2004. The following recommendation given by the ICG in 2001 (although the situation has improved significantly due to USA’s recognition and raised acceptance of the OFA by ethnic Macedonians) is still valid: “the conflict with Albanians and the perceived shortcomings of the Framework Agreement have abruptly increased the importance of Macedonia’s identity crisis. The international community needs to reassure Macedonians on this issue in order to re-establish a more promising political environment for good faith implementation and constructive cooperation.”86 It is also crucial that the international community continue and strengthen its pressure on Greece and Bulgaria to recognize the existence of an ethnic Macedonian minority in their countries and grant them basic minority rights. Otherwise the present feeling that the international community is applying “double standards” by insisting on the highest level of minority rights and power-sharing arrangements in Macedonia, while the neighboring member of the EU Greece and the soon-to-be-member of the EU Bulgaria do not even recognize the existence of a Macedonian minority, will only fuel frustrations on the side of the majority in Macedonia.

There will definitely be challenges to inter-ethnic relations in Macedonia in the forthcoming period, both within the country and ones coming externally. Among the latter, the resolution of the final status of Kosovo and its regional consequences is the biggest challenge. However, it is equally important, not only for Macedonia but for the entire Western Balkan region that the EU keeps the commitments made in the Thessaloniki EU Council for the future of the Western Balkan states as members of the EU. If the EU, troubled by its internal problems, decides to postpone the Euro-integrative processes for these countries for long periods of time, or offers them alternatives other then the prospect of EU membership, its conflict resolution efforts in Macedonia and elsewhere in the Western Balkans will be blocked, since its conditionality will not the same attractive “carrot”. In such a situation, radical forces would find it convenient to question whether “incentives for cooperation and the non-violent pursuit of conflicts of interest through compromise outweigh any benefits that might be expected from violent confrontation.”87

The OFA was a settlement to an escalating armed conflict. It paved the way for peace and constructed official power sharing and ethnic conflict management mechanisms. I would argue that the principles that are part of the OFA can be used as proposals for conflict settlements in other ethnically divided societies. These solutions proved to be a moderate, sustainable compromise and a sound basis for power-sharing arrangements in a divided multi-ethnic society. This is also valid for the suggested conflict resolution mechanisms that include reforms in judiciary, public administration, and education as pillars of confidence-building and reconciliation in such societies.

However, it must be noted that the “Macedonian process” of reaching the agreement for the conflict settlement can not be easily implemented in regions outside the area of possible Euro-Atlantic enlargement. The success of the international community in brokering the conflict settlement was primarily due to Macedonia’s strong and strategic interest in joining the EU and NATO as a full member. The plausibility of such a future accomplishment, which was supported by the advanced stage of Macedonia’s Euro-Atlantic integration process made the country willing to cooperate with the conflict resolution mechanisms proposed by these organizations.

86 ICG, “Macedonia’s name: Why the dispute matters and how to resolve it”, (ICG Europe Report N°122, 10 December 2001), http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=11&tid=1688
When confronted with such an overview of the situation after the OFA, one must conclude that the resolution of the Macedonian ethnic conflict lies ahead in the future. The huge structural problems of the state remain unsolved. The socio-economic pitfall remains a threat to inter-ethnic relations. The basis of Macedonian statehood - its name and border - remains unresolved. The vicious circle of fears remains unbroken. The OFA was a settlement to an escalating armed conflict. It paved the way for peace and constructed official power sharing and ethnic conflict management mechanisms. The time for durable and thorough resolution of underlying causes is running.
APPENDIX 1

Timeline of ethnic conflict in Macedonia from 1990-2006

- **1990**: In February of that year, over 2000 ethnic Albanians demonstrated in the district of Tetovo (majority Albanian populated) against their treatment by the Macedonian majority. The protesters also demanded independence for regions in Western Macedonia where ethnic Albanians constitute a majority. In August, the first ethnic Albanian party, Party for Democratic Prosperity (PDP) was formed. The party's main objectives included the attainment of proportional representation in of ethnic Albanians in the Macedonian Government and advancement of Albanian cultural rights. That same month, The Presidium of the Republican Committee for Nurturing the Ethnic and Cultural Traditions of the Roma accused the Party for Democratic Prosperity in Macedonia of persistently manipulating the Roma and using Islam as its vehicle. At the first pluralist parliamentary elections in Macedonia held in November-December that year, ethnic Albanian parties won 25 of the 120 seats in the Macedonian Parliament.

- **1991**: On 25 January of that year, the Macedonian Assembly voted a Declaration of Sovereignty and a Declaration of the Right to Secede From the SFRY. In March that year, three ethnic Albanian ministers were elected in the new non-partisan, “expert” Government of Macedonia. On 31 March that year a nation-wide census was conducted (see results in Table 2). Ethnic Albanian leaders did not recognize the results of the 1991 Census. On September 8 of that year Macedonia conducted a referendum for independence. The overwhelming majority was in favor of an independent state. PDP submitted a "Declaration for the equal status of the Albanians in Macedonia" to the President and the Prime Minister. This declaration was rejected. The majority of ethnic Albanians boycotted the Referendum. The Parliament adopted the new Constitution of the Republic of Macedonian on 17 November 1991. The adoption of the Constitution was boycotted by the Albanian MP’s to protest against their status in the new Constitution.

- **1992**: In January that year, ethnic Albanians implemented an independent, unofficial and self-organized referendum for the establishment of an “Autonomous Republic of Ilirida”, which would comprise of the majority Albanian populated territory of Macedonia. Reports said that 99% of the participants in the referendum opted “yes”. No independent or reliable sources can be found regarding the actual turnout or voting of the Albanian population. In any case, according to positive law, neither the process, nor the results of this referendum were recognized by the state. In that same month, January 1992, the EC Arbitration Commission chaired by Robert Badinter (formed to advise the EC on the recognition of former Yugoslav republics as independent states) concluded that Macedonia and its Constitution satisfy all of the requirements of international law.

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89 Such accusations from Roma political leaders towards ethnic Albanian political leaders have been numerous during the examined period.
including those relating to the protection of minority rights. Badinter’s Commission recommended international recognition of Macedonia. The EC countries did not proceed to recognize Macedonia, as a result of Greek pressure against the term Macedonia in the country’s name. In February that year, approximately 3,000 Serbs protested against Macedonian independence in Skopje. Representatives of the Democratic Party of Serbs in Macedonia (DPS) and of the Association of Serbs and Montenegrins in Macedonia (ASMM) addressed the rally. In March that year, app. 40,000 ethnic Albanian demonstrated in the Macedonian capital of Skopje. The protesters demanded that the Macedonian nation should remain unrecognized by the international community until the state grants ethnic Albanians the right of autonomy in regions where they make up the majority. In June, in Radoliste - village near the Albanian border, Macedonian police reportedly found a cache of pistols, Kalashnikov assault rifles, Skorpio machine guns, explosives, ammunition, and uniforms with the Albanian emblem of a black two-headed eagle. In November, clashes between Macedonian police and ethnic Albanians in the mostly Albanian neighborhood of Bit Pazar in Skopje left four people dead and 36 injured. The unrest exploded when the police arrested and allegedly severely beat an ethnic Albanian youth charged with illicit dealings of cigarettes. The validity of these allegations has not been independently verified. Following the clashes, the police detained 87 people and expelled 27 rioters, 11 of them being citizens of Albania and 16 living in Kosovo. The Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) was founded in the town of Kicevo, Macedonia. Three of the founders of the KLA, which was operating in Kosovo, later founded the National Liberation Army (NLA) which was operating in Macedonia. In November that year, the Ministry of Interior announced the seizure of 2,000 leaflets calling on ethnic Albanians to wage war for the right to self-determination. They were signed by the “Ilirida Albanian Youth Movement”. In November that year, the President of the Republic of Macedonia, Kiro Gligorov asked the UN to establish a preventive deployment mission in Macedonia. In December that year, the Macedonian Assembly (Parliament) passed a new citizenship law that prescribed a 15-year residency requirement for obtaining Macedonian citizenship through naturalization. Ethnic Albanian political representatives fiercely opposed this law, arguing for a 5 year residency requirement. The shorter residency requirement would have been in the interest of ethnic Albanians that migrated to Macedonia in the 1980’s and early 1990’s. That same month, the UN Security Council authorized the deployment of 700 United Nations Protection Force troops, along with 35 observers, 26 police officers, and 50 administrative personnel. The mission later on known as UNPREDEP, mainly monitored the border between Macedonia and Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, as well as the Macedonian-Albanian border for any possible expansion of the neighboring conflicts into Macedonia.

1993: On April 8 that year, Macedonia became a member of the UN, under the provisional name “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”, pending settlement of the dispute with Greece over the name “Macedonia”. In November that year, Macedonia’s Deputy Defense Minister Hisen Haskaj and Deputy Health Minister Imer Imeri, both ethnic Albanians, were arrested for alleged involvement in aiding the development of Albanian paramilitary groups. In December, the

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continued disagreements between hard-line and moderate factions of the ethnic Albanian PDP, culminated in the resignation of party president Nevzat Halili, General Secretary Mithad Emini, as well as the entire party presidium. PDP radicals, led by Menduh Thaci, complained strongly that the party, as part of the ruling coalition, had made too many compromises that undermined ethnic Albanian interests.

- **1994:** At a national congress held by the PDP in February that year, the party officially splintered into two factions. The “moderate faction”, led by the old leaders, was determined to work within the system and achieve ethnic Albanian demands through compromise. The “radical faction”, led by Arber Xhaferi and Menduh Thaci, heavily criticized the government and generally opposed government policies. On 22 June of that year an internationally monitored census was conducted (see results in Table 2). As tensions concerning the census escalated, ethnic Albanians and Macedonians clashed in the city of Tetovo. A Macedonian youth was stabbed fatally in the dispute. In July, the PDP temporarily walked out of the Macedonian parliament in a show of protest against the conviction of several ethnic Albanian accused of organizing separatist paramilitary activities. PDP announced that its new aim is no longer the federalization of Macedonia but the proportional representation of Albanians in all political institutions. At the October parliamentary elections, ethnic Albanians won 19 seats and the new Government included 4 ethnic Albanian ministers. The largest Macedonian opposition party Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization-Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity (VMRO-DPMNE) boycotted the second round of elections, accusing the Government of election fraud. Macedonia's census showed that ethnic Albanians accounted for 22.9% of the country's population. Ethnic Albanian political representatives claimed that the census was “irregular”. According to their claims, ethnic Albanians comprised app. 40% of the population. The international observers of the census dismissed those objections. In December that year, the government blocked the opening of an Albanian-language University in Tetovo, declaring it illegal. Previously that year, the government passed a law that guaranteed a quota of a minimum of 10% students from national minorities at the University of Skopje. The quota was expanded later on to reflect the percentage of each national minority in the total population.

- **1995:** In February 2,000 ethnic Albanians gathered for the opening of the Albanian language university in Tetovo. Around 2,000 ethnic Macedonian students protested outside of the Parliament demanding the closure of the Albanian-language university. The police closed the university and one person was killed in the clashes with the protestors. All 19 ethnic Albanian members of Parliament temporarily withdraw from Parliament demanding the right to use the Albanian language in Parliament and the approval of the Albanian language university in Tetovo. The Dean of the then illegal university was sentenced to two-and-a-half years in jail for inciting the February 17 riots outside the university.

- **1996:** In July, around 3,000 ethnic Albanians demonstrated in Skopje, demanding the release of five of their leaders and permission to set up an Albanian language University in Tetovo. The demonstrators, which carried Albanian national symbols,

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91 Acronym in Macedonian.
accused the government of discriminating against the Albanian minority and asked for international support for setting up their University. In September, ethnic Albanian MP’s sent a letter to the European parliament asking it to “put pressure on Macedonia to give up the nationalistic concept to create a Macedonian state, as that is contrary to the multiethnic reality of the country.”

1997: In February that year the government allowed Albanian language instruction at the Faculty of Pedagogy in Skopje. Thousands of ethnic Macedonian university and high school students engaged in street demonstrations and even hunger strikes demanding the annulment of this law. The government did not respond to these demands. The mayor of Gostivar (populated by a majority of ethnic Albanians) and his supporters had taken a confrontational stand by defying a ruling in May by Macedonia’s Constitutional Court that other countries’ flags (in the case the flags of the Republic of Albania and Republic of Turkey) should not be flown on public buildings. In an effort to defuse tension in Gostivar and the nearby town of Tetovo, on 7 July, Parliament passed a law allowing the controversial flags to be flown outside the town hall, but only on certain Macedonian national holidays. The mayors in both towns rejected the law. Tensions erupted into conflict on 9 July after the government sent in special forces to take down the Albanian and Turkish national flags flying outside Gostivar’s Town Hall. Rufi Osmani, the town’s mayor organized protests and stated that “our territories in Macedonia are our territories, and they should get it into their heads, once and for all, that the Albanian flag will fly over these territories forever.”92 His speech “called for disobedience to the then government of Macedonia, transformation of Gostivar into an ‘Albanian town’, regionalization of the state etc. He concluded that ‘the only court we respect is the court of the Albanian people’.”93 On that day, 9 July, a group of about 200 persons attacked the police, using Molotov cocktails. This group was dispersed, but a few hours later another 7000 to 8000 persons gathered and again attacked the police, using smoke grenades. During the searches of various buildings and offices, the police found illegal weapons (including machine guns), documentation about the organization of ‘crisis headquarters’, as well as huge amounts of medications and other medical equipment needed in case of an armed conflict. During the search of Osmani’s house, the police found three illegal handguns, as well as lists of persons with various logistic and military tasks.94 In these clashes the police shot dead two young ethnic Albanians, and a third man was beaten and later died from the injuries, while several policemen received bullet wounds. The Ministry of Interior announced that 312 people had been arrested, including the town’s newly-elected radical mayor, Rufi Osmani and Tetovo Mayor Alajdin Demiri. Osmani was sentenced to prison for 13 years and 8 months, later reduced to 7 years by the Court of Appeals. Demiri was sentenced to two and a half years in prison. Both were released from prison with an amnesty after serving 1 year and 3 months in prison. After the riots, the governing Social-Democratic Union of Macedonia

93 Ibid.
94 Ibid.
(SDSM)\textsuperscript{95} retained the support of the moderate ethnic Albanian PDP. The two parties had co-operated in government since 1992, with the Albanian holding five cabinet posts in return for their support of a step-by-step policy to end discrimination against this minority. In December that year, a new and more radical right-wing Albanian party was formed from former members of PDP and the National Democratic Party (NDP). The name of the new party was Democratic Party of Albanians (DPA) and its president until today is Arben Xaferi. The Macedonian courts refused to register this party, since the party's coat of arms contained a flag of a foreign state (the flag of the Republic of Albania) and the name of the party was not written in the official language and alphabet of the Republic of Macedonia.

- **1998**: VMRO-DPMNE, the right-wing ethnic Macedonian party won the elections and formed a governing coalition with the DPA. Ljupco Georgievski, the VMRO-DPMNE leader and Prime Minister said that he expects no trouble from extremists neither from his or Xhaferi's party. Xhaferi, stated that “Albanians now must learn to work with Macedonians”.

- **1999**: In January that year, Parliament adopted an amnesty law basically intended to grant amnesty to the imprisoned ethnic Albanian mayors, Rufi Osmani and Alajdin Demiri, as a sign of relieving ethnic tensions. In February, a veto by China prevented the UN Security Council from authorizing an extension of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) in Macedonia for a further six months. UNPREDEP left Macedonia. On 24 March 1999 NATO launched air strikes against Yugoslavia. During 1999 app. 360,000 refugees from Kosovo came to Macedonia where they were placed in refugee camps and private homes. The international community promised financial aid to Macedonia for the hospitality given to the refugees from Kosovo. In May that year, DPA stated that Albanians were no longer satisfied with their status of national minority. “We want Macedonia to proclaim itself a multi-ethnic country made up on an equal basis of a Macedonian and an Albanian nation”- said Adelina Marku, spokesperson of DPA. That same month, Dragisha Miletic, President of the Democratic Party of the Serbs in Macedonia (DPSM) said that over 22,000 people have joined his party since NATO launched air strikes on Yugoslavia. He said that the party, which has been set up in 1991, had 52,000 members. Furthermore he stated: “We will fight NATO troops if they launch a ground war in Kosovo from Macedonian soil”. In fall that year, the NLA was formed.\textsuperscript{96} It was founded and led by Ali Ahmeti, Fazli Veliu and Emrush Xhemajili who were also founders of the (KLA) in 1992. In November that year, Boris Trajkovski, ethnic Macedonian, candidate of VMRO-DPMNE, was elected President of the Republic of Macedonia with the large support of ethnic Albanian voters (the result of these elections is widely contested, by well-grounded accusations of election fraud).

- **2000**: On the 11 January, three policeman were killed and one wounded at the village of Aracinovo (near Skopje). On 30 January, through a Communique, the NLA claimed responsibility for this attack. At the beginning of 2000, flyers were discovered in Southern Kosovo proclaiming the formation of the Albanian National

\textsuperscript{95} Acronym in Macedonian.
Army (ANA). In February the founder of the NLA, Fazli Veliu was arrested in Germany, on the basis of an international arrest warrant issued from Macedonia for his involvement in the bombing of a police station. The Macedonian Minister of Justice, an ethnic Albanian, did not send the necessary documents for Veliu’s extradition and German authorities released him. Ethnic violence broke in Southern Serbia, in the border area between Macedonia, Serbia proper and Kosovo. In April that year, four Macedonian soldiers were captured by Albanian militants near the border village of Tanusevci. In exchange for their release, it was reported that the government released Xhavit Hasani, who later become NLA commander in Macedonia.

- 2001:
  - January: Albanian insurgents claimed responsibility for a rocket attack on a police station in Macedonia, which left one officer dead and wounded another three.
  - February: The construction of the South-East European University at Tetovo began. This is a three-lingual university (Albanian, Macedonian and English), established with donations from the international community and in-kind donation from the Macedonian Government. The other University in Tetovo (the one established in 1994) was still treated as illegal. On 16 February Albanian militants in the border village of Tanusevci (between Macedonia and Kosovo) come across a A1 TV crew, seize all the equipment, and immediately boot them out. On 19 February ethnic Albanians clash with a military patrol in Tanusevci. The ethnic wore the insignia of the new NLA. On 23 February Macedonia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia signed an Agreement for Border Demarcation. The Agreement also included the border between Macedonia and Kosovo. On 28 February NATO agreed to start dismantling the buffer zone around Kosovo because of growing evidence that Albanian separatist guerrillas were using it to stage incursions into southern Serbia. NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson ordered an immediate political and military mission to the Macedonian capital Skopje. In the meantime, ethnic Albanian militants fought separate battles with Serb and Macedonian forces. In the Presevo valley in Serbia, ethnic Albanian rebels clashed with Serb forces near Bujanovac.
  - March: The Macedonian Parliament ratified the Agreement for Border Demarcation with FR Yugoslavia. The PDP voted against ratification on the ground that political parties in Kosovo were not consulted. NATO issued an appeal to Macedonia not to embark on a military offensive against ethnic Albanian insurgents. The Macedonian authorities on their part warned NATO that they were losing patience following the appearance of about 200 ethnic Albanian fighters in the border village of Tanusevci. The Macedonian Army announced mobilization. On 14 March ethnic Albanian insurgents started military clashes with the Macedonian security forces on the hills surrounding the city of Tetovo. Tanks entered Tetovo, and Albanian positions were hit by mortar fire. The government gave them an ultimatum to surrender or face all-out attack. After a large military operation of the Macedonian security forces, the insurgents retreated from Tetovo. Fighting

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97 Macedonian intelligence information presented by Mr. Stevo Pendarovski, National Security Advisor to the President of the Republic of Macedonia, TV Interview, Kanal 5 TV, 16 May 2006.
at the border areas with Kosovo continued. On the 21 March, one Macedonian policeman was killed in Skopje by unknown attackers.

- April: On 9 April in Luxembourg, Macedonia signed a Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) with the EU. On April 28, NLA fighters murdered and brutally desecrated the bodies of eight members of the Macedonian security forces. Since four of the massacred soldiers and policemen were from Bitola, in the following days ethnic Macedonian demonstrators in Bitola destroyed property of ethnic Albanians and some Macedonian Muslims as a reaction to the massacre. After the death of another three members of the security forces from Bitola in June 2001, such riots reoccurred. At the end of these riots around 100 shops and 10 houses were damaged or completely burned down.\(^9\)\(^8\) Damage was also inflicted at the local mosque and Muslim cemetery.

- May: The death toll of the conflict continued to rise. The NLA captured 12 ethnic Macedonian civilians. After being regarded as “missing” for some time, they have been declared dead. Their mass grave is yet unknown. A “Government of National Unity” was formed, consisted of the major ethnic Macedonian and ethnic Albanian political parties. The fighting in the northwestern part of Macedonia continued. On May 29, the two major ethnic Albanian political parties in Macedonia, the DPA and the PDP signed a joined platform with the NLA in the city of Prizren in Kosovo-the “Prizren Agreement”. At the end of May, several members of the Macedonian Academy of Arts and Sciences gave a proposal (as a personal one, not an official proposal of the Academy) for “land and people swapping” between Macedonia and Albania, as one possible solution to the crisis.

- June: NLA fighters occupied the village of Aracinovo, in the immediate vicinity of the capital Skopje and threatened to bomb Skopje, the main international airport and the main oil refinery (all in the vicinity of Aracinovo). On 15 June, NLA fighters shut off the water supply to Kumanovo, a town of about 100,000 people. The water crisis continued for the next two weeks. Under EU and NATO pressure the Government called off the offensive in Aracinovo. NATO soldiers evacuated the armed NLA fighters from Aracinovo to another location. As a reaction to this, on 26 June, members of Macedonian security forces protested in front of the Macedonian Parliament, shooting in the air and demolishing parts of the Parliament building. That evening the leadership of the country was evacuated from government buildings. On 27 June, US President George Bush issued an executive order for depriving Balkan extremists of support. The order was followed by a proclamation that restricted entry into the United States to those who threaten international stabilization efforts in the Balkans or who are responsible for wartime atrocities. The NLA was included in both statements.

- July: Negotiations between the two main ethnic Macedonian parties (VMRO-DPMNE and SDSM) and the two main ethnic Albanian parties (the DPA and PDP), under the patronage of the Macedonian President Boris Trajkovski and representatives of the international community, intensified. They were

aimed at reaching a political solution to the crisis. In the meantime, isolated clashes between the NLA and Macedonian security forces continued.

- **August:** On August 8, ten Macedonian soldiers were killed and 3 wounded in an NLA ambush on the Skopje-Tetovo highway. The killed soldiers were from the Prilep garrison. As a reaction to this, demonstrators in Prilep burned down the local mosque. Later on, the new Albanian National Army (ANA) assumed the responsibility for this attack.\(^9\) Two days later, seven members of the Macedonian security forces were killed by a landmine. On 13 August the document providing the political settlement of the crisis was signed - the **Ohrid Framework Agreement (OFA).** On 22 August, St.Athanasius Church in Leshok, was blown up. NLA claimed that it did not commit this act.

- **September:** NATO (Essential Harvest Mission) started collecting NLA weapons in three phases. Each phase of weapons collection was matched by a phase of Constitutional Amendments in the Macedonian Assembly. On 27 September, after the three phases of weapons collection were over (3,875 weapons were collected), Ali Ahmeti announced the disband of the NLA.\(^1\) That same month, the new Albanian National Army (ANA) informed that they will continue to fight against “occupiers of the Albanian territories” in Serbia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Greece on their way to creating a Greater Albania. This group is opposing the OFA and “favors the unification of areas populated by Albanians in several neighboring Balkan states into an independent entity.”\(^1\)

- **October:** The first academic year started at the newly opened South-East European University in Tetovo, with three-lingual instruction (Albanian, Macedonian and English).

- **November:** From 1-15 November a nation-wide census was held (results can be seen in Table 2). ICTY Chief Prosecutor Carla del Ponte, in a visit to Skopje on November 20 stated that she had begun investigations against Macedonian security forces and NLA fighters. That month the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg rejected the suit filed by Mr. Rufi Osmani and others against the state of Macedonia, in which they claimed that they were unlawfully sentenced to prison by the Macedonian courts for their participation in the Gostivar riots in 1997.

- **December:** On December 5, Macedonian President Boris Trajkovski pardoned 11 jailed members of the NLA.

**2002:** On March 7 that year, the Assembly passed the Amnesty Law, granting amnesty to persons involved in the 2001 conflict until 26 September 2001, except those who have committed war crimes and crimes against humanity. In June that year, the ethnic Albanian political party - Democratic Union for Integration (DUI) was formed, out of the former members of the NLA. Ali Ahmeti, the political

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\(^1\) "Albanian Rebel Army Disbands", (Guardian Unlimited, 27 September 2001), http://www.guardian.co.uk/macedonia/story/0,7369,559342,00.html

\(^1\) MIPT Terrorism Knowledge Base, Albanian National Army (ANA), http://www.tkb.org/Group.jsp?groupId=3546
leader of NLA was elected president. On 14 September, Ethnic Albanian militants, reportedly from the ANA, opened fire on a car that was part of a convoy accompanying Interior Minister Ljube Boskoski\textsuperscript{102}. On the September 15 Parliamentary elections, the ethnic Macedonian SDSM and the ethnic Albanian DUI won and formed a coalition government with twelve ethnic Macedonian, six ethnic Albanian and one ethnic Serb minister. On 4 October, the ICTY Prosecutor requested Macedonia to send five specific investigations and prosecutions of alleged crimes committed by the NLA and the Macedonian forces in 2001 to the International Tribunal: 1. the "NLA Leadership" case (against the leadership of NLA, alleged of various crimes committed in 2001); 2. the "Mavrovo Road Worker" case (against the NLA, three ethnic Macedonian construction workers kidnapped and molested, later released); 3. the "Lipkovo Water Reserve" case (against the NLA allegedly shutting down the water supply to the city of Kumanovo); 4. the "Ljuboten" investigation (against Macedonian security forces allegedly killing 10 civilians) and 5. the "Neprošteno" investigation (against NLA, for alleged crimes committed against Macedonian civilians, including a number of mass graves discovered in Neprosteno).\textsuperscript{103} Macedonian authorities complied with the ICTY request on 25 November 2002. In November that year, Macedonia conducted a census (results in Table 2).

- **2003:** On 14 February, a remote-controlled bomb exploded at the Court of Original Jurisdiction in Struga, a town 170 km southwest of Skopje. The ANA claimed responsibility for this attack, stating that it was in response to the recent arrests of Albanians by "colonial Slav-Macedonian authorities." They added "courthrooms in Macedonia have turned into purgatory for Albanians."\textsuperscript{104} At the end of March that year, EU's first military mission "Concordia" came to Macedonia in a peacekeeping capacity to take over from a previous NATO Mission. On 27 August that year Avdil Yakupi, a.k.a Commander Chakala briefly abducted a Macedonian police officer and a civilian. Twenty-four hours after the abduction, unknown attackers tossed grenades at a government building, a courthouse, and military barracks in the capital Skopje. He was later arrested in Kosovo and extradited to Macedonia, together with another former NLA fighter, Xhemail Hyseni a.k.a Commander Jamie Shea. In December that year, EU Mission "Concordia" left the country, to be replaced by a EU-led police-advisory mission named “PROXIMA”.

- **2004:** In January 2004, the Macedonian Parliament recognized the University of Tetovo, which became a official third state University with Albanian language of instruction. Five out of the original thirteen faculties were recognized. On 26 February, the Macedonian President Boris Trajkovski was killed in a plane crash. Branko Crvenkovski, the former Prime Minister succeeded him after presidential elections in April. From February until July that year, according to the provisions of the OFA, a revision of the municipal boundaries in Macedonia was made. The number of municipalities was reduced from 120 to 84. The ethnic Macedonian opposition and various members of civil society opposed the revised municipal boundaries and labeled them as "ethnic gerry-mandering", i.e purposefully creating municipalities where Albanians would be more than 20%, which would

\textsuperscript{102} MIPT Terrorism Knowledge Base ...
\textsuperscript{104} MIPT Terrorism Knowledge Base ...
enable them to use the special provisions of the OFA. The World Macedonian Congress and the ethnic Macedonian opposition organized the collection of 150,000 signatures in order to test the law on a referendum. By 23 August 180,454 signatures were collected and the referendum was scheduled for November 7. On November 4, the USA recognized Macedonia under its constitutional name. The referendum held on November 7 failed, because of the low turnout of 26,58%, no matter that 94,01% of them voted against the revised municipal borders. In December 2004105, in the village of Kondovo, which is part of the City of Skopje, an ethnic Albanian armed group, lead by Agim Krasniqi occupied the village and did not allow the entering of Macedonian security forces. At that time Agim Krasniqi was already indicted for robbery, illegal possession of weapons, and kidnapping, acts committed prior to the 2001 armed conflict. As former NLA commander he demanded amnesty and re-socialisation for himself and his group of supporters. The government decided not to use force to enter the village. Instead, members of both the governing and the opposition ethnic Albanian parties went to negotiate with Krasniqi in Kondovo.

- **2005:** Since Agim Krasniqi’s demands were not satisfied he occupied the village again from February until August 2005. On 15 March, the ICTY released an indictment against Ljube Boskoski and Johan Tarculovski, both suspects in the “Ljuboten” investigation. Two days later, on 17 March Macedonian authorities extradite Johan Tarculovski, former member of the Macedonian security forces. On 24 March Ljube Boskoski, former Macedonian Minister of Interior, surrendered himself to the Hague Tribunal. In the March Local Elections, the DPA boycotted the elections accusing the governing ethnic Albanian party, the DUI of organizing election fraud. On 25 April the ICTY informed that the only indictment out of the five received cases would be for the “Ljuboten” investigation. There was to be no ICTY indictment in the other four cases, all against members of the NLA, and they are to be returned to the Macedonian courts by the end of 2006. On 15 July, the Macedonian parliament passed a law enabling any ethnic minority to display its flag alongside the Macedonian flag in areas where that minority constitutes more than 50 percent of the population. This was one of the last legislative measures that needed to be adopted in order to fulfil the legislative obligations proscribed by the OFA. In August 2005, Agim Krasniqi agreed to disband his armed men controlling the village of Kondovo and appear before a magistrate to face his indictments. However, the magistrate then withdrew all national and international warrants against him in return for Krasniqi’s promise that he will appear before court regularly. This judicial decision was widely criticized by both the ethnic Macedonian opposition and President Crvenkovski. The dominant public impression was that the withdrawal of his warrants was the “price” for the political settlement of the Kondovo crisis. To date, Krasniqi has not appeared before the court and his trial is held “in absentia”, since the police stated that Krasniqi is “unavailable and unreachable to be arrested.” This is despite his regular appearances at his party’s (DPA) political meetings organized merely a few kilometres from the centre of Skopje.

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APPENDIX 2

*Map 1. Ethnic map of Macedonia, Census 2002*

- Blue: ethnic Macedonian majority over 80%
- Light blue: ethnic Macedonian population between 50 and 80%
- Red: ethnic Albanian majority over 80%
- Orange: ethnic Albanian population between 50 and 80%
- Green: ethnic Turk majority over 80%
- Gray: no majority

*Source: on the basis of the results of the 2002 Census, State Statistical Office*
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