

## FOREWORD

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Capturing any change in time is difficult, particularly if the topic is as precarious as the post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina has been and still is. That is why each book dealing with and looking at the peace process in Bosnia-Herzegovina deserves a special attention. This especially relates to this piece of work created by an expert who had a chance to be very close to various segments of the implementation of this peace process be it on the ground or close up to the decision making institutions. This kind of practical experience combined with the outstanding analytical expertise makes this book very relevant and reliable source for any kind of historical analysis dealing with this period of time in this area.

The wars in the former Yugoslavia, among which the Bosnian one was the bloodiest, were the first after the fall of Communism and the last of the twentieth century. They took place at a particular time in history which facilitated their impact on regional, European and Euro-Atlantic relations. The international community was involved in the breakup of Yugoslavia from the very moment, beginning with the infamous “The Hour of Europe” statement to unenthusiastic peace initiatives to bombings and arms twitching of spoiler groups.

The involvement of the international community was particularly significant and intensive in relation to the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina and even more so in the implementation of the Dayton Agreement once it mounted enough pressure on the warring parties to end the war.

Therefore, the peace process in Bosnia-Herzegovina was a direct result of the involvement of the international community and the international community will be responsible, along with the locals, for its eventual success (or failure). Without going any deeper into the interventionist *problematique*, I will underline few key elements of this analytical peace of work.

The main asset of this book is the fact that it moves a step further from ‘simply’ analyzing relations among the foreigners, among the locals and relations between the two camps and rather strives to give a holistic

picture of the Bosnian peace process that revolves around one key issue – state building. The author develops an original model of phases of post-war state building under foreign supervision: first comes security building, then institution building and eventually norm building all this oriented to the final goal of democracy building. And yet than all this process, providing they will end successfully, will enable some form of nation building taking of course very persistently account of the specific Bosnian conditions, especially the relations among three constitutional nations. However it would be the task of some future analysis and research.

The author explains what constitutes each phase, making sure we understand that these phases flow into each other and are to be separated for analytical purposes only, allowing occasional sidestepping of developments on the ground. The key question the author asks herself is whether the intervention is viable, that is whether the international community as the guardian of state building will be able to transfer the process to the locals? Are locals to eventually ‘embrace’ the state that is being created by foreign decree?

There are other issues touched upon in this peace of work – the question of why intervening at all, ethical issues in intervention, the impact of Euro-Atlantic relations, the politics of victimhood and many more. Senada cannot give the final verdict on the level of success of the state building intervention in post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina, but she skillfully manages to create a firm analytical framework for a study of state building interventions as such, and the Bosnian case in particular. In addition, she manages to raise a few fundamental questions on defining the nature of intervention; on discerning a point in time when a peace process can be judged finished; on creating further problems by raising too high expectations; on empowering a local actor who can take over the process once the intervener decides to leave.

She has answered or has come close to answering some of these fundamental questions and has managed to end the analysis of the Bosnian state building experience in an optimistic tone. This is no easy task.

This book focuses, within certain time limits, on a phenomenon of state building in Bosnia-Herzegovina – the process that is still evolving and thus constantly redefined. The author has assumed a demanding task of capturing core elements of this process in a comprehensive framework, perceptively incorporating few fundamental issues in the analysis. The result is a piece of work that is informative, probing and multilayered, although a work-in-progress as the author herself concludes. A work-in-progress that, in my opinion, has managed to systematically order a number of elements of ‘state building under foreign supervision’. One could hardly expect more from the effort which is shaped in the time where there are still a lot of uncertainties, challenges and threats existing on the ground which makes impossible for all actors to create a reliable “exit strategy”

Mladen Staničić  
Institute for International Relations  
Zagreb

