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Bosnia: Democracy in Slow Motion

By

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Executive Summary:

Bosnia-Herzegovina's democratization is in slow motion. On the outside it appears that the framework for democracy is in place. A closer look reveals that it lacks the civil society to under gird its political institutions. As Piotr Sztompka points out,

“building a house is not the same as establishing a home. The former is only the shell, the empty framework . . . it is a concern for architects. The latter is the living arena of social actions and interactions . . . it is the concern for sociology. The more or less explicit recognition of that distinction between the institutional and the cultural-civilizational spheres is also indicated by other terms, i.e. public sphere versus civil society” (Sztompka, 1996 in Chandler, 2000).

Bosnia-Herzegovina - from here forward Bosnia - lacks the inner workings that distinguish a home from a house.

Positive steps have been taken. The international community has undertaken efforts to promote democracy from the top-down and from the bottom-up. As for the former, a constitution was developed in conjunction with the (Dayton Peace Agreement) DPA. The structure it establishes for Bosnia's political institutions account for the country's unique demographic challenges by coding power-sharing arrangements into the political landscape. As for the latter approach, democracy promotion actors are attempting to transform Bosnian society into “democrats” - people who understand what it means to be democratic citizens - a necessary

prerequisite for building a democracy (Chandler, 2000). This has translated into grassroots efforts to build a robust civil society. Other actors have emphasized the protection of human rights, political pluralism, and the importance of a free media. Donor states and international organizations are providing democracy assistance funds. Economically, the state is making measured progress on repairing its infrastructure, but suffers from high unemployment. Socially, the country has not reverted to civil war—a major success for a nation so deeply divided along ethnic and religious lines.

Yet, despite these positive indicators, closer assessments show that Bosnia's democratization has accomplished little in the time that has elapsed since the agreement at Dayton. Elections have been held several times, and been declared to be "free and fair" by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). However, that assessment is disputed. As in other countries experiencing democracy promotion efforts, some have argued that the OSCE judgment of the Bosnian elections as "free and fair" had ulterior motives. Skeptical assessments of Bosnians' resolve to democratize have led to further oversight and involvement by the international community, not less.

This is the overarching problem. Bosnia needs to take the reigns and begin governing itself. Instead, it is reeling under the weight of international micromanagement. Bosnia is more stable today than before international intervention, but the net result of democracy promotion efforts there is a country barely advancing in its pursuit of democracy.

This paper is divided into two main sections. In the first, I explore Bosnia's background and challenges to democracy promotion. In the second, I make recommendations for future democracy promotion efforts.

Background:

Historical Prelude

The on-going democracy promotion efforts in Bosnia are the first in that country's history. Prior to the dissolution of Yugoslavia, Bosnia had not experienced true independence, let alone democracy. Dating back several hundred years, Bosnia and much of the Balkans fell under the rule of the Ottoman Empire, followed by that of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and after World War I, communist rule (Wevling, 2003). In the years after WWII, Marshall Tito came to power and led Yugoslavia from 1953 until his death in 1980. He led by strength and kept a tight lid on any ethnic differences (Amanpour, 1995).

Following his death, no leader emerged during the remainder of the decade that shared Tito's popularity or adept ability at managing such a diverse country. As a result, ethnic and nationalist movements began in Yugoslavia's six republics as each vied for independence from the leadership in Belgrade. In 1991, Croatia fought a brief war with the Yugoslav Army and declared independence. Upon Croatia's recognition by the international community as a sovereign state (Karatnycky and Ackerman), Bosnia followed closely in their footsteps.

Following its first true elections, conflict erupted in Bosnia in the spring of 1993. The conflict disintegrated into civil war and genocide as ethnic hatreds surfaced. Serbian and Yugoslav leadership under Slobodan Milosevic attempted to regain control of the country through Bosnian Serbs and the Yugoslav Army. After three and half years and more than thirty cease fires, some lasting only hours, the international community, successfully intervened (Karatnycky and Ackerman). Conducting "coercive diplomacy" backed by NATO military action, the U.S. persuaded the warring parties to agree to a negotiated peace at Dayton (Holbrooke, 1999). Lacking a traditional invitation, the international community started the

democracy promotion process following Dayton and Bosnia began its nascent democracy as part of the third wave of democratization (Huntington, 1991).

Current efforts to promote democracy

On 14 December 1995, Bosnia embarked on the path of democratization with the official signing of the DPA in Paris. Progress remains slow, the DPA has flaws (Keane, 2002), and a lot of the fault lies with the international community's approach to democracy promotion.

The international community has played a robust role in Bosnia's democratization since its beginning. The main actors have included the United Nations (UN), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the European Union (EU), the OSCE, the Office of the High Representative (OHR), NATO, the European Forces (EUFOR), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, two hundred NGOs (Chandler, 2000), and the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY). The OHR has played a central role, stretching his hands through the political sphere to all aspects of Bosnia's democratization. It is a rotating position created to oversee all of the governmental decisions that the Bosnian government makes.

The OHR holds the ultimate trump card. He can enact or veto legislation, overruling decisions reached by the Bosnian government or mandating that they do something he believes to be in their best interest (Chandler, 2000). This oversight applies to the Parliamentary Assembly and the tripartite Presidency. The OHR began his position with a lot of power following the DPA. The original design was for the OHR, as well as that of the civilian implementers and military enforcers of Dayton, to facilitate a year-long transition to Bosnian sovereignty, culminating in federal elections and the establishment of a permanent Bosnian government. This design was revised on a couple occasions, ultimately supplying the

international community with an indefinite mandate for the Bosnian mission (Chandler, 2000). The Bonn Peace Implementation Conference (PIC) in 1997 was a part of these reviews. It increased the OHR's power in response to what the international community regarded as an undemocratic mindset on the part of both Bosnian leaders and the electorate (Essential Texts, 1998 and Belloni, 2004 and Chandler, 2000).

In addition to negotiating a peace settlement and erecting the OHR, the DPA established a Bosnian constitution and political institutions to govern the country. To understand the rationale behind their structure, a person must first understand Bosnian demographics. The DPA divided Bosnia into two entities, along ethnic lines. The Bosnian Federation constitutes 51% of the nation's territorial landmass—the Republika Srpska (RS) the other 49% (Stroschein, 2005). The General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina (GFA - same as the DPA) set up the Federation and RS entities as a *de facto* or 'soft' partition, each with all the powers that the constitution does not specifically give to the federal government (Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina in *Essential Texts*, 1998). The federal government was designed to be weak, holding only minimal powers (Wevling, 2003). The central government's powers include foreign policy, trade, and law enforcement between the entities. The entities form their own, sub-state governments to handle matters such as education and law enforcement (Chandler, 2000). Additionally, they have the authority to develop special parallel relationships with border countries so long as they do not interfere with the federal government's foreign policy (Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina in *Essential Texts*, 1998).

The federal government's institutions are that of the Presidency, the Council of Ministers, and the State Parliament. The Presidency is a tripartite Presidency made up of three representatives, one from each of the three ethnic groups: Serbs, Croats, and Bosnian Muslims.

Voters determine the Presidency by casting a single vote along ethnic lines. The politician with the most votes from each group becomes their representative in the Presidency. The one with the most overall votes becomes the chairman of the Presidency.

The State Parliament, or Parliamentary Assembly, is composed of two chambers, the House of Peoples and the House of Representatives. The constitution outlines a method of ethnic coding of seats for these chambers. The goal is to protect minority rights and to force a power-sharing arrangement. These are especially critical considerations in the aftermath of the genocide that occurred during the civil war. They are also important because all three ethnic groups are a minority; without combining forces, none constitutes a majority.

Bosnia's House of Peoples is comprised of 15 delegates, five each from the Muslim and Croat delegates of the Federation's House of Peoples, and five from the RS National Assembly. The House of Representatives has 42 delegates, two-thirds are from the Federation, one-third is from the RS (Chandler, 2000).

The Council of Ministers is akin to the U.S. Cabinet. The Presidency nominates two Co-Chairman of the Council of Ministers, a Serb and a Bosnian Muslim, with a Croat as Deputy. The cochairmen then choose the Ministers. Two Deputies are chosen for each Ministry and cannot be from the same ethnic constituency as their Minister (Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina in *Essential Texts*, 1998).

The complexity of the political institutions has advantages and disadvantages. It ensures that each group has a proportional number of seats in the State Parliament when compared with the population. It sets up a power-sharing arrangement that forces politicians to cross ethnic lines to pass legislation. On the other hand, it reinforces ethnic divisions by actually encouraging

individuals to vote for politicians with whom they share a common ethnic background (Chandler, 2000).

In addition to institutional challenges, several concerns exist regarding Bosnian elections. One is that the main political parties are all nationalist in nature. Another is that the Bosnian people are not truly committed to democracy. A third is that the international community is too involved in the process. Each of these arguments has validity. Specifically, the Muslim Party of Democratic Action (SDA) is the favorite of Bosnian Muslims, the Serbian Democratic Party (SDS) the prime party in the Republika Srpska, and the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) is the party who continually wins the most seats from among Bosnian Croats (Karatnycky and Ackerman).

The leaders in these parties provide security for the people in their ethnic group by promoting their interests in the government. The people can count them to protect them from undue encroachment from politicians representing the other ethnic groups. Leaders in these three parties become the known commodities and the comfortable choice for ambivalent voters. They also use their position to maintain the divisions between the ethnic groups and to prey upon the insecurities of voters (Karatnycky and Ackerman) who might otherwise desire to support one of the opposition parties.

Opposition parties - such as the Party for Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Democratic People's Union, the Croatian Party of Rights, or Joint List - are ones started by the OSCE and OHR and mandated to be multi-ethnic in their appeal and representation. Despite donor funding from Western governments and intense efforts by the OSCE and their Democratization Branch to establish an environment of political pluralism (Chandler, 2000 and Wevling, 2003), opposition party candidates only won six to seven percent of the seats in the Parliamentary Assembly during

their best showing in the first couple of federal elections (Chandler, 2000). Since implementation of Dayton, Bosnia has held elections every couple years, at local and national levels. In 2000, a non-nationalist party controlled the government for the first time (Keane, 2002). In 2002, Bosnian officials were entirely responsible for the elections for the first time, but nationalist parties seized power across the government again in that election (Belloni, 2004). In October 2006, the nationalist parties proved they remained the strongest. The Serbian Coalition, which favors an independent state, narrowly defeated the Muslim-Croat Federation which favors a unified Bosnia (Infoplease Webpage, 2007).

Another concern is that the Bosnian people are not committed to democracy (Chandler, 2000). Various OHRs have been particularly critical of them. The first OHR, Carl Bildt, believed, as did the international community, that Bosnians would vote in “free and fair” elections for politicians from parties which represented multiple ethnicities. When they overwhelmingly voted along ethnic lines despite the OSCE Democratization Branch’s best efforts to establish viable alternative parties, Bildt and the other international actors were disheartened. Their hope that Bosnia’s transition to self-government would be a relatively rapid and painless one began to fade (Chandler, 2000).

The outcome of the elections, similar to what has occurred in the last few years in Iraq, have caused some scholars and actors in the democracy promotion arena to question whether the elections were held too early. Before the elections, the prevailing assessment was that the populace, comparatively well educated and economically well off before the war, would adapt to democratic governance quickly. This assessment, coupled with the typical pressure to have a successful outcome and to go “home,” caused the international actors to set the date for the first elections to be less than one year after the DPA were signed (Chandler, 2000). For any country

so fresh from a civil war, this would present a challenge. For Bosnia, this was especially true because of the level of intensity of the conflict, the number of casualties incurred by all sides, and because there was no past tradition of democracy.

Although the OSCE assessed the elections as “free and fair,” the lesson learned by the OHR was that Bosnians were not ready for self governance. The OHR petitioned the international community for more power. The Bonn PIC conducted a review of the situation and gave it to him. The reasoning was that greater involvement was needed by the OHR to empower him to properly guide Bosnia through a democratization process that was to be longer than first thought (Chandler, 2006). The problem is that this reasoning has continued and expanded into many areas, ranging from politics to law enforcement. While meaning to help, the over involvement of international actors has actually crippled Bosnia, making a successful and rapid transition to self governance more difficult.

Another front on which democracy promoters in Bosnia have attempted to make progress is with the media. Their desire is to foster the development of an independent media, not influenced by the government. The efforts in this vein have been coordinated to assist with parallel attempts to strengthen political pluralism. The rationale is that by strengthening the media and increasing their coverage of the election process and all the political parties, the opposition parties will gain traction among the voters. The problem is that those overseeing the media have censored their coverage (Wevling, 2003) – the opposite of what should be occurring. International actors have placed constraints on what the media is allowed to say. For instance, they are not allowed to use war jargon or to speak too critically of the government or of political candidates (Chandler, 2000). Without these controls, the concern is that the media would provide biased coverage, favoring the three ethnically aligned parties, thereby reinforcing ethnic

tensions. However, the emplacement of these constraints has limited effect in developing a more balanced media and certainly does not make them free.

While a portion of the focus has been on the top-down approach of democracy promotion and therefore on political institutions, international actors have also implemented the bottom-up approach. Dialogue Development, NGOs, and the OSCE have conducted civic education programs and trained target individuals, trying to build Bosnia's civil society (Chandler, 2000). One of the main elements of civic education has been to encourage voters to embrace multi-ethnic opposition parties. Another has been to provide an active process to broaden Bosnians' "notions of political identity" and "to give the local stakeholders in Bosnia a concrete 'project' to work on, such as constitutional reform, that will generate concrete results for which they are responsible and which will in turn affect the quality of their lives" (Marjanovic, 2005). If election results are any indication, it appears that these efforts are missing the mark.

The protection of human rights has also been a primary focus of international actors. At Dayton, Bosnians received the greatest level of human rights protection of any country in the world (Chandler, 2000). The DPA accepted sixteen international treaties on human rights as Bosnian law. In comparison, the United States has only agreed to be fully bound by three and the United Kingdom by ten (Chandler, 2000). The treaties to which Bosnia agreed range from the Geneva Conventions to conventions against genocide, discrimination against women, and torture. Others are in support of child rights, migrant workers, minority languages, refugees, and basic civil, political, economic, social, and culture rights (Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina in *Essential Texts*, 1998).

Since Dayton, the UNHCR has had the assistance of government agencies and NGOs to assist internally displaced persons and refugees seeking repatriation. The government agencies

have included the Federal Ministry for Displaced Persons and Refugees, the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees, and the Ministry of Security. The NGOs have included Bosnia and Herzegovina Women's Initiative, Bosnian Humanitarian Logistics Service, Catholic Relief Services, and Mercy Corps Scotland. They, along with military forces serving under the UN's peace enforcement mandate (UNMiBH) and NATO command, have facilitated the safe return of many of the estimated million refugees (UNHCR webpage) created during the war.

The rest of the story is that although many refugees have returned to Bosnia, they have not all returned to their pre-war home. The map today looks substantially different than it did before the war. Before the war the ethnic groups were heavily intertwined. Today, a map depicting current demographics indicates a largely segregated landscape. The Federation is home to the Bosnian Muslims and the Bosnian Croats; the RS is home to Bosnian Serbs. The Federation generally comprises the central, southern, and western portion of Bosnia and borders Croatia; the RS comprises the northern and eastern regions and borders Serbia. Within the Federation, the western portion is the Herzegovina region and is where the majority of Bosnian Croats live. This segregation of ethnic groups is an example of a practical solution that has been successful. It is not what Westerners would prefer. It does not resonate with American understanding of our "melting pot." It has, however, contributed to the stability on the ground. Without that stability, the concerns of the international community would not be focused on what has gone wrong with the democratization process; rather, like in Iraq, it would be on how to end the continued bloodshed.

Characteristics of the country that present challenges to democracy promotion

Bosnia has several characteristics that typically make democratization difficult. It has no history of democracy. It is the only traditionally and culturally non-homogenous country in Europe. Its high levels of ethnic tensions were punctuated by approximately two hundred fifty thousand deaths during the war (Infoplease Webpage for Bosnia). Systematic, wide spread use of rape and abuse of prisoners added to the genocide to drive deeper the wedge between Bosnian Serbs and Muslims, and to a lesser degree between each of these groups and the Bosnian Croats. Thus, according to historical studies, Bosnia also fits into one of the least desirable categories of countries – those prone to a fresh outbreak of hostilities.

Nascent democracies formed in post-conflict societies which experienced particularly fierce fighting and tremendous numbers of casualties have a higher tendency to revert back to violence. Reverting into civil war is a real possibility in a fledging democracy because democracy promotes competition. Political and economic competition can be healthy and promote a free society where all people share equal opportunities for advancement - politically, socially, and economically. However, intense competition that comes too soon after a civil war can reinforce the ethnic divisions and hatreds still lingering in people's psyche (Wewling, 2003). If this happens, competition proves to be a hindrance to reconciliation rather than a mechanism that increases the freedom within the society.

Role of the country within the broader international community

Bosnia is a relatively small country, yet it has been a significant part of history. Bosnian Muslims are a mark of the Ottoman Empire's influence on the country. During the time of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Bosnia's current capital city of Sarajevo was the site where Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated, leading to the start of WWI. A brief visit to Sarajevo or one of Bosnia's other major cities immediately reveals vestiges of communist rule: tall, drab, grey,

and rectangular shaped apartment buildings, scattering the urban landscape. While Bosnia does have a wide variety of natural resources, the decision by the international community to intervene was driven by other considerations.

Primary among them was the morale concern for the genocide that was occurring. According to most reports, the Bosnian Serbs committed genocide on the largest scale. However, there were no innocent parties to the conflict (Amanpour, 2000). Genocide did make it difficult for the UN and EU to ignore the conflict. This was especially true because of the timing of Bosnia's civil war. With the end of the Cold War, human rights and democracy promotion were coming to the forefront once again. Bosnia provided an opportunity to promote both and to prevent the conflict from spilling over into the surrounding countries.

In addition, the European Economic Community (EEC) became the European Union on November 1, 1993, in the middle of the Bosnian civil war. The EU was looking to expand its role across Europe and to become a global actor. Thus, its leaders realized the importance of the EU's intervention to end the Bosnian conflict, the worst atrocities since WWII (Infoplease Webpage). Bosnian was a test case for EU relevance and strength.

Other potential challenges to successful democratization

The manner in which the territory was distributed in the DPA left all parties feeling as though they had lost valuable ground. The Serbs lost Sarajevo; Muslims and Croats were upset because the Serbs gained 49 percent of Bosnia's territory (Keane, 2002). Such perceptions posed a challenge from the start of the democratization process. The tension between promoting Bosnian self-governance and maintaining international oversight to direct the state in the right direction presents another real challenge to successful democracy promotion. Finally, external radical Muslim influence represents a potential challenge. Wealthy Muslims, particularly from

Saudi Arabia, are funding the building of new mosques. The problem comes when these mosques and the money behind them bring a radical Islamic influence. While Bosnia has become known to the intelligence community as a “safe-haven and gateway” for transnational terrorists, mosques like the King Hussein Mosque in Sarajevo have become known meeting locations for them.

Recommendations:

Continuity in policy

The emphasis on civil society and Europe’s lead role are the two primary aspects of current democracy promotion efforts in Bosnia that the international community should continue. As for Europe, their fingerprints are all over Bosnia’s democratization process. Various actors that are primarily or entirely centered in Europe are the actors in Bosnia now. The OHR serves a dual hat as the EU’s Special Representative to Bosnia. Additionally, his office is staffed with European leadership. The OSCE and their underling organization, the OSCE Democratization Branch, are the critical players in the election process and in rebuilding Bosnia’s civil society (Chandler, 2000). And in December 2004, EUFOR assumed responsibility for the peacekeeping mission from NATO.

Changes from existing policy

The international community’s approach to democracy promotion has caused the OHR, OSCE, and other actors to lose sight of what democracy is. The spirit of democracy must be regained. Democracy at its core is government by the people, or by their duly elected representatives. While some international oversight and establishment of other components are essential to promote the rule of law in a democratic society – a constitution (or its equivalent),

political institutions, an independent judiciary, a free media, competitive elections, interest groups and NGOs - a democracy ceases to be a democracy if the ultimate power does not truly rest with its people. This is the problem that Bosnia faces. Actions taken by the OHR have shifted the accountability of elected politicians from their constituents to the OHR himself. Understandably, it has also created resentment among the people and suspicion of the true intent behind the democracy assistance they receive (Chandler, 2000).

More needs to be done in rebuilding Bosnian civil society, transferring ownership of governance from regional European organizations to the Bosnian people. It will include scaling back the international presence and improving Bosnians' capacity to be engaged democratic citizens. Actors need to actively seek opportunities to transition from a front line role to that of a coach supporting and teaching from the sidelines, gently nudging indigenous leaders and supporters at all levels to step into new roles. That means Bosnians filling traditional democratic roles of advocacy and of strengthening Bosnian NGOs and special interest groups.

A good place to start would be by establishing a plan for phased withdrawal of democracy promotion actors. In the first stage, regional actors could allow Bosnia the freedom to chart its own course while overriding only the most grievous actions - for instance, those that could cause the country to revert into civil war or that would decrease the power of the people and the accountability of politicians to them. In the second phase, regional actors would step back further, coaching political leaders and integrating them into regional and international organizations, but not overriding any of their decisions. The final phase would leave Bosnia on its own, but still accountable to regional powers and organizations for membership and the related benefits, such as inclusion into the EU's free trade union, an opportunity to adopt the

Euro as their currency, and representation in the EU's Council of Ministers and the European Parliament.

Over this progression, the police and military would also be allowed to stand on their own. Initially, EUFOR's transition would shift from largely unilateral action to capture the few remaining war criminals sought by ICTY, such as Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic, to solely training their Bosnian counterparts. After the Bosnian units met mutually agreed upon proficiency benchmarks, EUFOR elements would allow them to run themselves, gradually weaning the Bosnians of materiel and financial support.

Finally, much work still needs to be done to strengthen Bosnia's economy. In the final year of the war, GDP per capita had dropped to less than \$500, twenty percent of its prewar figure, while unemployment skyrocketed to 80 percent (Cousens and Cater). Unemployment remains high at 45% (Infoplease webpage for Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2007). New building is occurring, but more people need jobs. Economic growth will have reciprocal benefit in the political and social spheres, in reinforcing the peace (Kant, 1983). The public's general outlook on life will improve and people will go forward with their lives, allowing the mental freedom to contemplate and shape political matters.

Variation in actor strategy

The democracy promotion actors in Bosnia are the appropriate actors. The common theme in my recommendations is that their level of involvement is what needs to change. They should all be looking to work themselves out of a job (at least in Bosnia). Without this mentality, Bosnia's democratization process will never move forward. Just as those working from the bottom-up to build Bosnia's civil society, so those working to promote democracy from the top-down must adopt this mindset.

The most critical place to start is with the OHR. Bosnia's political institutions are workable, but its democracy is both handcuffed and made dysfunctional by his stifling presence. His position needs to gradually give up its powers, no longer assuming supreme powers over Bosnia's affairs. The OHR should no longer have the ability to veto legislation, directly influence the outcome of elections (Wevling, 2003), or to force the resignation of members of the tripartite Presidency. [In five years under Dayton, the OHR exercised the power three times (Chandler, 2000)]. Doing so undermines the electorate. Bosnian officials, and those in any democracy, must be accountable to their constituents first. Accountability to regional organizations and the international community is healthy and should be part of the equation, but not the overriding factor.

This transition will force Bosnian's politicians to accept responsibility for the country's direction. Their decisions will hold weight and they will be accountable to their citizens. Political discussion, negotiation, and compromise will become valued aspects of democratic life in Bosnia – as they should in any democracy. They will no longer be disdained as unnecessary and progress retarding, as at least one OHR has viewed them (Chandler, 2000). The public will see the change, the media will report it, and Bosnia will decide its future on its own.

The international community and especially the democracy promotion actors currently in Bosnia must be prepared that Bosnia's every decision will not be according to their liking. Their democracy will look different than that of other states. The constitution agreed to by Bosnia at the DPA should be retained, but accountability should shift from the OHR to the EU, under the auspices of membership review to join that organization within the next decade. This form of accountability has proven very effective in shaping the democratization and positive trajectory of other Central and Eastern European countries (Cameron, 2007).

Long-term trajectory

Success for Bosnia is full membership in the EU within ten years. EU membership requires candidate countries to accept and meet EU standards in over 30 categories (collectively the EU *acquis*). The topics of importance include trade, economic growth, social policy and employment, institutions, education, cooperation on justice matters, and foreign and security policy. While the *acquis* are not entirely about democratization, acceptance into the EU does mean a more democratic Bosnia.

For the EU's part, they should extend Bosnia an invitation to begin membership ascension (European Stability Initiative Recommendations, 2004a). NATO has already extended a hand to Bosnia by inviting it to begin membership in its Partnership for Peace (PfP), normally a precursor to membership in the parent organization. The EU has taken an initial step. So far, they have negotiated a Stability and Association Agreement (SAA) with Bosnia, but it has yet to be implemented due to Bosnia's failure to demonstrate "concrete progress on police reform and ICTY cooperation" (OHR Webpage). Bosnia needs to live up to its requirements, or they will lose all credibility. As Bosnia fulfills its obligations, the EU should extend an invitation for full membership. The prospect of receiving the extended benefits of EU membership - beyond those that come with the SAA - will motivate Bosnia to even further compliance.

Throughout this process, the EU should be careful not to allow certain leaders to sabotage the invitation, as has been done to Turkey by the current French President and his newly elected successor. Both Chirac and Sarkozy have publicly undermined Turkey's bid for EU membership by stating that the EU should never allow Turkey to join. These statements come despite the fact that Turkey is already in the initial stages of EU membership review.

Secondly, the EU should follow the Kosovo situation closely and prevent it from having spill over consequences with Bosnia should Kosovo gain independence from Serbia. It is important that regional actors do not allow Bosnian Serbs and Croats to use such a situation as an opportunity to gain their independence from Bosnia, or to secede to Croatia and Serbia. Bosnia's best opportunity for consolidation of its democracy is within the general framework of its current constitution and borders, but with the recommendations I have made in this paper. Serb and/or Croat independence would further splinter an already small, fragile state, undoing the democratization progress and stability of the last 12 years. It would unnecessarily shift the demographic and geopolitical dynamics in a region still stabilizing from war's long felt consequences.

Conclusion:

Despite frustrating and unsuccessful aspects of democracy promotion efforts thus far, some baby steps have been made in the right direction. Democracy promotion is a long term process; Bosnia is not unique in this regard and it is a particularly difficult case. The peacekeeping mission in Bosnia has ensured that Bosnians followed the rule of law. That, however, is only a necessary but not a sufficient condition for the consolidation of democracy (Maley and Sampford).

The main problem has been international over involvement in recent years. A high degree of intervention was necessary to end the war, establish a constitution, and develop institutions. Indeed, Bosnia's constitution was written by U.S. negotiators (Burg and Shoup, 1999), giving Bosnians little ownership of it – except that their leaders in 1995 agreed to what the Americans crafted.

Mr. Schwarz-Schilling, the current OHR, and his office are still drafting legislation for Bosnian officials (OHR Webpage). His suggestion to Bosnian leaders to “focus on rationally organized institutions, better coordinated planning and management of resources, a single economic space, improvements to the country’s business environment and serious and sustained job creation” is appropriate (OHR Webpage). However, the time has passed for the OHR to be writing legislation for the Bosnians. Rather, it is time to return political sovereignty to Bosnia, and to make their politicians responsible for further social reforms and economic growth.

Although they have been heavily involved thus far, the international community’s will and donor funding will not continue indefinitely. Both Bosnia and the actors promoting democracy there must ensure that the country is completely ready when that day comes. They can accomplish this by gradually giving Bosnians more ownership in their governance. This is what US Secretary of State Warren Christopher intended when, on the occasion of the first post-war elections, he noted, “Now the Bosnian people will have their own democratic say. This is a worthy goal in and of itself, because the only peace that can last in Bosnia is the peace that the people of the country freely chose” (Christopher, 1996 in Chandler, 1999).

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