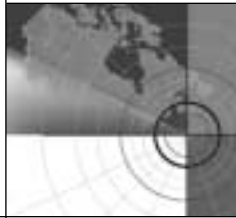# IRPP Policy Matters

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Lost in Transition: Canada and the Search for a 3-D Solution in Kosovo

Julian Wright

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Julian Wright was research assistant to Hugh Segal, the president of the IRPP, from 2004 to 2005. He is a McGill University graduate in economics and history, and his work experience includes research conducted at NATO headquarters and at the Brookings Institution in Washington, DC. He is currently working toward a degree in law at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Law.

Summary

Since the successful NATO intervention in 1999, Kosovo has languished in a legal and political limbo as an international protectorate. Despite the greater role assigned to its provisional government, it remains under the control of a wide-ranging coalition composed of the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, NATO and the European Union. In the context of long-standing tensions between the Albanian majority and the Serb minority in Kosovo's multi-ethnic society, this uncertain status has aggravated economic hardship, political instability and the weakness of the rule of law.

Two events in 2004 alerted the international community to the need for a new Kosovo strategy. After a series of local, ethnically charged incidents, dozens of violent riots targeting minorities broke out in March, overwhelming the international presence on the ground. In the parliamentary elections later that year there was a lamentably low Serb voter turnout as a result of fear and the inflammatory rhetoric from Belgrade.

Albanians and Serbs have lost patience with the present transition process. The countries and international organizations administering Kosovo have been forced to admit that waiting for the region to adhere to stringent standards of governance is no longer tenable. This goal must instead be anchored in concrete progress in terms of the future political status of Kosovo. Recent action by the international community has raised hopes in the region. A renewed dialogue on this issue has been initiated, with a view to a resolution by mid-2006.

On its merits and shortcomings, the Kosovo experience is instructive to Canada's current 3-D policy, which seeks to integrate defence, development and diplomacy efforts. The international presence in Kosovo has lasted for half a decade. It will remain necessary for the foreseeable future. It is premised on broad cooperation among NATO allies and between international organizations in the pursuit of a variety of important objectives. In this sense, it is a precursor of the 3-D approach. The situation in Kosovo also points to the limitations of this strategy. The local population has grown restless, even as living conditions have improved. In the years to come, the Kosovo situation will require a realistic framework aimed at achieving genuine progress — something it currently lacks. Clear goals and objectives are necessary.

In keeping with the 3-D strategy, one must look beyond the immediate question of status to Kosovo's future in the region. A decision on that front will not solve all of its problems. It can only put it on the right track. The protection of minorities, the weakness of the provisional government, severe

unemployment, parallel systems of service delivery and continuing security concerns are all reasons for the world to remain in Kosovo.

Based on majority opinion, inertia and the inability of the two sides to reach an agreement, Kosovo's independence from Serbia would appear inevitable. Looking ahead, Canada must be prepared to lend police and even military support to the successor of the NATO force. It must support Kosovo's dialogue with, and eventual integration into, NATO and the EU. Serbia must be given equivalent guarantees to maintain a regional balance. The way forward does not involve determining who has caused the greater harm and assigning blame. The goal must be to fill the power vacuum in a historically unstable region of Europe and finish what Canada and its allies started. While 3-D might be the right approach, its implementation requires a long-term partnership with Albanians and Serbs, demanding of Ottawa a consistent foreign policy and a procurement strategy focused on staying power, in which leadership and vision are essential.

Résumé

Depuis l'intervention réussie de l'OTAN en 1999, le Kosovo s'est retrouvé dans les limbes juridiques et politiques en tant que protectorat international. Malgré le rôle accru du gouvernement provisoire, le Kosovo reste sous le contrôle d'une large coalition à laquelle participent les Nations unies, l'OSCE, l'OTAN et l'Union européenne. Dans le contexte des tensions historiques entre la majorité albanaise et la minorité serbe, ce statut incertain a aggravé les difficultés économiques et l'instabilité politique et a affaibli la capacité de faire prévaloir la règle de droit.

En 2004, deux événements ont sensibilisé la communauté internationale à la nécessité d'adopter une nouvelle stratégie dans cette région. Après une série d'incidents à caractère ethnique, des dizaines de manifestations violentes contre des minorités ont éclaté en mars, laissant les forces internationales impuissantes. Par la suite, à cause du climat de peur et de la rhétorique incendiaire provenant de Belgrade, la participation des Serbes aux élections législatives a été lamentablement faible.

Tant du côté albanais que du côté serbe, les Kosovars s'impatientent maintenant devant la lenteur du processus de transition en cours. Et les pays et les organisations internationales qui administrent le Kosovo ont été forcés d'admettre qu'on ne pouvait plus attendre que la région adhère à des standards de gouvernance élevés avant d'aller de l'avant. Pour atteindre cet objectif, il faudra qu'il y ait de réels progrès quant au statut politique du Kosovo. À la suite des initiatives récentes de la communauté internationale, le dialogue a repris, avec l'espoir de trouver une solution à l'horizon mi-2006.

L'expérience du Kosovo, tant à cause de ses échecs que de ses succès, peut aider le Canada à mieux définir son approche « 3D » (défense, diplomatie, développement) intégrée en matière de relations étrangères.

La communauté internationale est au Kosovo depuis plus de cinq ans et sa présence, qui demeurera sans doute nécessaire dans un avenir prévisible, repose sur une vaste collaboration entre les membres de l'OTAN et les organisations internationales dans la poursuite de divers objectifs majeurs. En ce sens, cette initiative était précurseure de l'approche 3D. Mais elle indique aussi les limites d'une telle stratégie à long terme, car la population s'impatiente, même si ses conditions de vie s'améliorent.

Dans les années à venir, le Kosovo aura besoin d'un cadre réaliste axé sur les résultats, ce qui fait actuellement défaut ; et les objectifs à atteindre devront être clairs. L'approche 3D exige aussi qu'on examine et qu'on tienne compte d'enjeux autres que la question du futur statut du Kosovo. Peu importe le choix qui sera fait sur ce plan, cette décision ne pourra régler à elle seule tous les problèmes de la région ; elle ne peut que la mettre sur la bonne voie. La protection

des minorités, la faiblesse du gouvernement provisoire, le chômage élevé, les systèmes parallèles de distribution de services et les questions constantes de sécurité sont autant de raisons qui justifient la présence de la communauté internationale au Kosovo.

L'accession du Kosovo à l'indépendance apparaît inévitable compte tenu d'une opinion publique majoritairement favorable, de l'inertie et de l'incapacité des deux parties d'en arriver à un accord. Cela implique que le Canada devra être prêt à fournir un soutien policier et même militaire à ceux qui prendront le relais de l'OTAN. Le Canada doit également soutenir le dialogue entre le Kosovo et l'OTAN, ainsi que l'UE, et appuyer, éventuellement, son intégration à ces communautés. La Serbie, pour sa part, doit recevoir des garanties équivalentes qui permettront de maintenir l'équilibre dans la région.

Dans cette démarche, on ne doit pas tenter d'établir qui a causé le plus de torts ni qui doit être blâmé. L'objectif est de combler le vide du pouvoir dans cette région historiquement instable de l'Europe, et de terminer le travail que le Canada et ses alliés ont commencé. L'approche 3D est probablement la bonne mais elle suppose l'établissement d'un partenariat à long terme avec les Albanais et les Serbes. Pour Ottawa, cela signifie qu'il faut établir une politique étrangère cohérente et une stratégie d'approvisionnement à long terme, impossibles sans un leadership fort et une vision claire.

Julian Wright

Introduction

In a society like Kosovo, where tensions run high, a single incident can have dire consequences. A Human Rights Watch report relates one such story. Late one evening in March 2004, as Jovica Ivic walked home through a village near Pristina, he was shot from a passing car. Ivic, an 18-year-old Serb, survived the attack and claimed that his assailants were Albanian. His account of the shooting prompted outraged Serb villagers to block the Pristina-Skopje road, an important thoroughfare. Violence is said to have ensued. Passing Albanians were allegedly attacked by the angry villagers, as were the NATO peacekeepers sent in to remedy the situation (Bouckaert 2004, 16). Over the next few days, as a result of similar incidents, more than 30 violent riots flared in the small Balkan protectorate (ICG 2004, 15). Kosovo appeared on the verge of collapse.

Though brief, the blocking of one of the main roads in the troubled region was indicative of a broad social paralysis. Since the NATO intervention in 1999 and the cessation of major conflict, economic and social interaction has been slow to return, and stability continues to fall short of international expectations. Much of this is tied to the question of status, an issue indefinitely postponed following the intervention. The region is currently governed as a United Nations protectorate, allowing local Albanians and Serbs to vie for control of Kosovo's destiny. Neither group is happy with the temporary solution. The former wants nothing short of independence, while the latter advocates for strengthened ties with Serbia. The March violence merely brought these issues to the fore, demonstrating that the region's future remains contentious.

While Kosovo's political institutions and security organizations are operational, their capabilities can be hollow and their mandate can conflict with that of the international organizations in the region. Economic difficulties, especially unemployment, slow social and political progress. Security remains difficult to maintain in some communities, inhibiting freedom of movement. Many members of Kosovo's minority populations, particularly Serbs, live outside the mainstream of society. Driven by suspicion and encouraged by partisans in Belgrade, inhabitants of these Serb areas depend on unmonitored parallel governments. The voter turnout in these communities for the latest elections was lamentable.

It is important to remember that despite these shortcomings, Kosovo has made genuine progress in many fields. The intervention remains a success story. Kosovo's worst security problems have been solved, it has held a series of fair and successful elections and it has taken steps to close the gap between its diverse ethnic groups. Yet the status question hinders the consolidation of these gains.

This unsettled grievance weighs heavily on the region, directly obstructing progress in a number of areas. In others, it allows those concerned to evade responsibility for the problems they are best placed to solve. To enable Kosovo to move forward against this backdrop, the international community has initiated a renewed effort to open dialogue and explore options for immediate action. Such an effort must be decisive. It must be aimed at breaking the deadlock and integrating Kosovo into the international community. How can Canada, with its lengthy involvement in the region, support efforts to ensure the transition to status and stability?

With the international policy statement it released earlier in 2005, Canada is setting a new course for its foreign policy. A central tool embraced by the current administration is the 3-D approach, an attempt to seamlessly integrate Canada's defence, development and diplomacy efforts (Canada 2005, 26). Though the concept has not yet been fully implemented at the institutional level, results have been apparent on the ground. The Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Kandahar is one example of CIDA, Foreign Affairs and Department of National Defence personnel working together toward common goals.

Through its continuing presence in Kosovo, the international community has brought similar capabilities into play on a much wider scale, working to enhance Kosovo's economic development, the fairness of its political system, and its internal and external security in one broad operation. This now-historic example of a situation requiring a 3-D approach provides valuable direction for Canadian foreign policy in gauging the success of such strategies to date. It also points to opportunities for a Canadian contribution to the region's future.

This paper will look briefly at the background of the Kosovo conflict before studying the region's current political, security and social situation. Recent disturbances, such as the March 2004 violence and the election results later that year, will be shown to be features of a continuing debate over status and a sign of a potential crisis. The newly initiated dialogue and its possible outcomes will be discussed in more depth, and options for resolution and a Canadian contribution will be explored. Remedies will be suggested to the region's more serious problems. Finally, the application of these lessons to current world crises will be explored through a consideration of the broad implications of a society in transition in the post–Cold War era.

A Mission Accomplished?

Much like the entire Balkan region, contemporary Kosovo is a mosaic of cultures, though one group clearly predominates. Out of a population of nearly 2 million, almost 90 percent are ethnic Albanians. Serbs account for another 7 percent —

a little over 100,000 — while other communities, such as Ashkali, Roma and Turkish groups, make up the remaining 5 percent. This ethnic range parallels Kosovo's religious diversity. Serbs are primarily Orthodox, and the area has a rich cultural endowment of churches. Though Kosovo is home to some Catholic and Orthodox Albanian groups, the overwhelming majority of Kosovo's dominant ethnicity is Muslim. Serbs and ethnic Albanians have long vied for control of the region, but the situation worsened with the rise of Slobodan Milosevic in 1987 and the drastic reduction of regional autonomy for Kosovo within Serbia through a 1989 referendum, in which ethnic Albanians had little voice.

These events resulted in Kosovo dominating international news and debate little more than half a decade ago. A protracted guerrilla conflict over autonomy between the pro-independence ethnic Albanian Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and Serbian troops had plagued the region for years. More widespread violence erupted after a Serbian onslaught that killed thousands and left many displaced. When evidence of ethnic cleansing by Serb forces surfaced, NATO member states engaged in a three-month bombing campaign that brought the retreat of Serb forces and the installation of a UN-mandated administration backed by NATO troops.

The Balkan conflict was one of the most significant international events of the post-Cold War decade, setting the stage for a series of revolutionary changes in foreign policy. Over the course of a few months in 1999, NATO intervened outside of its members' borders for the first time, the United States overcame its post-Somalia reluctance to intervene and Western nations chose to circumvent the United Nations. A responsibility to protect was acknowledged and implemented well before the validity of that concept was widely recognized. By charting a new course in a strategically unfamiliar world, Canada and other Western powers were able to conduct a remarkably successful humanitarian and military operation.

Coming little more than two years later, the attacks of September 11 made the Balkan conflict appear the product of a simpler time in which the United States and its allies had the resources and political will to intervene on largely humanitarian grounds. There was an element of continuity, however. Both events appeared to support Charles Krauthammer's view that the "unipolar moment," in which the United States faced no direct threats to its global supremacy, would be characterized by new conflicts in which small states gained the ability to strike from afar and the former Communist Bloc disintegrated (Krauthammer 1990). September 11 and the smaller-scale attacks leading up to it added terrorism to this list of asymmetric threats. As attention shifted to new concerns and priorities, the practical interest of Western countries in the region waned — even though Kosovo was frequently cited as an example of a successful and well-orchestrated multilateral intervention. Iraq replaced it as the focal point of

religious and political strife in the context of the American-led Global War on Terrorism. A majority of countries in the former Soviet Bloc continued to move toward market-oriented democracy at varying speeds, bolstered by international aid and the prospect of full European Union membership. In this international climate, some forgot about Kosovo.

As media and research interest diminished, so did political interest in remaining involved in the region. Many of the original allied governments, including Canada, pulled out their troops, abandoning the province to the tutelage of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). This is not to say that there was ever a lack of resources in Kosovo — quite the opposite. A widely quoted 2003 RAND study showed that Kosovo had received 25 times more aid per capita than Afghanistan (Dobbins et al. 2003, xix). Even more startling, a recent International Commission on the Balkans report stated that 50 times more troops per capita had been deployed in Kosovo than in Afghanistan (ICB 2005, 7). Nevertheless, the smooth operation of the original intervention obscured some of Kosovo's enduring problems.

Strong leadership at an international level remains necessary to move a definitive solution forward. One should not confuse relative stability on the surface with a resolution of the underlying issues. The March 2004 violence proved that crises could materialize out of isolated local events. Fearful of being left behind, many of the region's minorities refuse to participate in Kosovo's nascent political institutions. The myriad reports produced by international NGOs and other organizations have been nearly unanimous in stating that the situation in Kosovo is simultaneously untenable and slow to generate homegrown change. Now that the United Nations has called for a resumption of talks on the region's future, the maintenance of international focus is critical. In order to finish the job, and for the reasons set out in this paper, the world must regain its interest in Kosovo.

The Economic and Social Context

Kosovo faces continuing ethnic tension. Low-level incidents involving the Albanian majority and the Serb minority have been occurring since the NATO intervention. There were numerous instances of kidnapping, murder and harassment in the early years; recent figures show a decrease in the most serious crimes, although the numbers are low enough to suggest that many crimes go unreported (Statistical Office of Kosovo 2004). Movement is hindered in some regions, to the point that individuals need to be escorted from one municipality to the next, and ethnic enclaves are guarded by military checkpoints (United Nations 2004b,

45). The Serb population is subject to haranguing from the Serbian capital, Belgrade; they are being urged toward isolation (ICG 2005, 15). The resulting uncertainty obstructs the return of displaced persons, ensures the isolation of Serbs and slows the development of inclusive politics.

Since the NATO intervention, parallel structures for public service delivery have existed in Serb areas, effectively fragmenting the region. Belgrade is said to have supported this situation for some time, primarily in contested areas like Mitrovica, through its Coordination Centre for Kosovo. According to the International Crisis Group, these branches of the Serb government have taken over health offices and government buildings. They have also poached Serb officers from UNMIK, reducing the ethnic diversity of Kosovo's government and undermining its authority (ICG 2004, 7-8). These Serb parallel structures have come to pose an insidious challenge to a negotiated resolution of the status question (OSCE 2003). According to one report, Kosovo's provisional institutions of self-government (PISG) pay wages of only about 200 a month, a mere quarter of what the Serb parallel structures pay (ICG 2005, 14). Kosovo's budget is simply not large enough to provide much incentive in the face of such challenges.

The situation is further complicated by the fact that many of these parallel structures provide services in areas where they are urgently needed. As a result, it has been suggested that they be integrated into the PISG after a resolution of status. It will take considerable pressure for the Serb government to agree to such an arrangement, but it will be necessary for the well-being of Kosovars. Some recognition of the special nature of these communities is equally inevitable. They have been allowed to drift for too long into a de facto re-annexation by Serbia. Because of the parallel structures, one could argue that partition is already a reality.

Aside from research conducted by international organizations and NGOs, there is little true understanding of Kosovo's overall situation. A reliable general census was last produced in 1981. There was no set of indicators on municipal issues until a UN study was done in mid-2003 (United Nations 2004a, 13). However, sufficient figures exist to indicate that the economic situation is poor. Kosovo's population suffers from irregular service delivery. According to one report, entire villages were cut from the power grid in 2005 (ICB 2005, 19-20). Unemployment may be as high as 50 percent, and it is even more severe among the youth and minorities. Kosovo's indeterminate status contributes to its economic troubles, such as its inability to take part in the international bank transfer system, ineligibility for loans from development banks and the general dearth of investment (Carlucci 2005). The region's imports outpace exports by a factor of 26. As of 2004, GDP per capita had not yet reached its 1985 level, even though the region has one of the fastest-growing and youngest populations in

Europe (Granitsas 2004). One positive sign is that extreme poverty has decreased by nearly half, to 10 percent (United Nations 2004a, 18). While this is great progress, the UN report theorizes that the positive growth may be due in significant part to emigrant remittances and international aid. In any case, it is apparent that the unresolved status issue unintentionally hinders the development of the local economy. One commentator has even suggested that until very recently, UNMIK had handicapped itself by interpreting its mandate so narrowly as to refuse to pursue a much-needed and thorough policy of privatization (Serchuk 2005). As an organization focused primarily on furthering Kosovo's political and regional stability, UNMIK may be ill equipped to help the economy grow.

On the whole, daily life in Kosovo is not yet up to the standard the intervening nations have set. While its level of development is far higher than that of the poorest countries of the world, it is one of the least developed areas of the region. This has demographic consequences: Kosovo also has the lowest life expectancy in the region (United Nations 2004a, 15). A good way to start addressing these problems would be to increase access to financing and to reduce bureaucratic hurdles (94-5). A *New York Times* commentary aptly argued that Kosovo is "the war we haven't finished" (Carlucci 2004). While the military operations have ceased, the battle that must now be fought and won is a political one. Of course, international tutelage did not make Kosovo poor. However, the current administration must do more to help Kosovo reach its full potential. An even more integrated approach premised on 3-D would be an effective response to this type of challenge in the future, as it would get development personnel on the ground right away. Through their work in conjunction with military and diplomatic officials, the economic revival of a region in crisis can begin quickly. The multidisciplinary nature of the approach also prepares the mission for the long-term commitment that any successful postconflict intervention must make. Of course, a lack of tangible status may stymie positive efforts, as it has in this case for UNMIK. Despite this challenge, the international mission has achieved an acceptable level of security in most regions. It must now ensure a comparable achievement in the standard of living if it is to be deemed a complete success.

The International Presence

Among the many international actors in Kosovo, NATO and UN security forces share responsibility for Kosovo's stability. The NATO Kosovo Force (KFOR) is the sole military presence in Kosovo. It entered the province in 1999 to fill the power vacuum created by the departing Serb forces. The original force was composed

of 19 NATO members and 11 partners, totalling nearly 48,000 troops. This included Canadian troops under Operation KINETIC (Canada 2000). Its numbers have dwindled since to 17,000, still a sizeable force for a comparatively small area. Its major contributors are Germany, France, Italy and the United States. The current Canadian presence is minimal.

On entering Kosovo, KFOR had three fundamental missions under UN Security Council resolution 1244. It was to ensure the withdrawal of forces of the former Republic of Yugoslavia from Kosovo, undertake the demilitarization and transformation of the Kosovo Liberation Army, and ensure Kosovo's defence during the region's transition (United Nations 1999). The first two missions were completed long ago. While the third directive remains relevant, KFOR troops have by necessity grown more concerned with Kosovo's internal stability than the hostility of its neighbours. As a result, KFOR was called on to intervene during the March 2004 violence, the force bolstered by a temporary influx of new British troops.

On the civilian end, the United Nations civil police force is the main law enforcement unit in Kosovo. It is complemented by the Kosovo Protection Corps, a largely unarmed force of 3,000 tasked with disaster relief and composed of former Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) troops, as well as by the Kosovo Police Service (KPS), which will eventually take over the UN's law enforcement duties completely. While KFOR continues to provide overall security in the region, the KPS has grown to over 7,000 officers and has taken on more responsibilities, including patrolling some sites of conflict. Expenditure on the KPS accounted for nearly 8 percent of Kosovo's 2004 budget (United Nations 2004a, 71). Like KFOR, the UNMIK police force has shrunk considerably to just over 3,500, but its capabilities are being replaced by new KPS officers trained in the OSCE-run police school. As a result of long-term involvement and a developing domestic security capability, violence has largely stayed beneath the surface in Kosovo.

The authority that monitors Kosovo's international situation and effectively conducts the region's foreign policy, the Contact Group, is an informal arrangement between the main international players in the region: the United States, the United Kingdom, the European Union, France, Germany, Italy and Russia. It was formed in 1997. The group is the true driver of progress toward Kosovo's ultimate political status in the international community, whether as an autonomous part of Serbia or as an independent state. To this end, it developed the standards and procedures together with the United Nations through which Kosovo's reform will be judged. In the original calculation, the region was to be rewarded with a resolution of its situation when certain conditions had been fulfilled. In 2004, the Contact Group vowed to focus its attention on critical areas such as freedom of movement, functioning democratic institutions, economic growth and refugee

returns, all in preparation for a resolution of Kosovo's place in the world (US Department of State 2004). The recent acceleration of the status-determination process has made the standards less immediately essential to a resolution. However, they are sure to form part of any agreement on Kosovo's future. The influence of these groups on Kosovo cannot be underestimated. In most decisions, the domestic government can be superseded by the Contact Group, as well as by the set of international organizations guiding development.

The Domestic Political Context

If success is measured by the establishment of new political and security organizations, Kosovo has shown true signs of improvement. Its political infrastructure, centred in the PISG, which includes an assembly, a president and a Kosovo-wide system of courts, has grown in size and strength. Yet the range of institutions obscures an absence of true capacity in some fields. This capability gap has kept the set of international organizations running the country from transferring key responsibilities over to the PISG. While Kosovars administer some portfolios themselves through the 120-member assembly, UNMIK retains ultimate control over a range of key fields, including police, defence, foreign affairs and customs, as well as final authority on finance and monetary policy (UNMIK 2001b). By chance and design, some of Kosovo's current political institutions are those of a weak state. The international community makes the important military, political and security decisions. Despite considerable progress, Kosovo's uncertain status means that it is not yet a self-governing entity.

Political direction and ultimate control of Kosovo remain with UNMIK, which delegates some of its responsibilities to the OSCE and to the EU. A special representative of the secretary-general (SRSG), currently Søren Jessen-Petersen of Denmark, heads the UN administration. Aside from its role in humanitarian relief, the UN mission is based on four pillars. Two of these pillars — police and justice (pillar 1) and civil administration (pillar 2) — are directly UN-run. The democratization and institution-building pillar is led by the OSCE, while the EU leads the pillar of reconstruction and development (UNMIK 2001a). The international administration in Kosovo thus reflects an inherent 3-D mindset. The multi-agency, multilateral approach showcases the challenges and the rewards of pursuing such a policy.

In May 2001, in an attempt to launch the development of a democratic Kosovo, UNMIK drew up the *Constitutional Framework for Provisional Self-Government* in Kosovo, which outlined the legal system and the institutions to be

put in the hands of Kosovo's leaders and civil servants after the November 2001 election. The framework was a roadmap to self-governance, tempered by the fact that Kosovo was not yet a sovereign state. It established Kosovo's government as a democracy with full separation of powers and respect for human rights, including the critical rights of equal opportunity, language and religion for all groups. It outlined a number of roles for the government, including those involving traditional domestic responsibilities, support of municipal services and protection of the mass media. Progress toward additional powers has been slow. In November 2004, UNMIK handed the government of Kosovo a broader mandate in local communities and in the troubled energy sector, minor responsibilities by comparison with those UNMIK still holds (US Department of State 2004). One achievement of the framework was to impose minimum quotas for minorities in all of the organs of the PISG — including the assembly — in an effort to build an inclusive society.

In the midst of this progress, the United Nations and other institutions have identified weaknesses in the current system. The framework does not elaborate fully on the government's regulatory powers. These also remain restricted by the international organizations involved in Kosovo. Moreover, many decisions of both the assembly and the cabinet are made through consensus. This leads to distortion of the policy-making process, as such decisions limit the flexibility of the executive in implementing directives and empower those holding out from agreements. According to the *United Nations Human Development Report* on Kosovo, this process impedes the delegation of authority and binds Kosovo's leaders in minute debate (United Nations 2004a, 64). Policy-planning capacity is thus a serious problem.

The legal background provided by the constitutional framework to address such issues is necessarily weak, as it must take into account Kosovo's lack of capacity and the fact that Kosovo is neither a state nor a truly subnational entity. According to a January 2005 report by the International Crisis Group, the government has handled budgets poorly; it has a history of "unfulfilled projects," as well as long surpluses followed by "a binge of dubious spending" at the end of the fiscal year (ICG 2005, 9). Moreover, such constitutional features as power-sharing and allocation by ethnic group may reinforce distinctions and undermine central authority. Faced with the single-digit participation rate of Kosovo's Serbs in the 2004 elections, a quota of representation does little to reverse a feeling of disenfranchisement. It may even hold the government back from developing an inclusive and multicultural political culture, substituting process for change. While international organizations on the ground work with the government, they are not always capable of filling the resulting policy vacuums.

The local situation can be even more complex. Municipalities are central to a positive resolution to Kosovo's troubles. They are the focal points of tension. It is at the local level that segregation occurs and discrimination is most apparent. Mitrovica, for instance, encompasses an uneasy balance between Albanian and Serb sections located on either side of the Ibar, the river that bisects the town. Local Serbs have repeatedly met attempts to open the bridge between the sections with strong resistance (Robinson 2005). While it is feasible to monitor the composition and ethnic balance of the overall government closely, it is more difficult in smaller communities.

Decentralization is actively becoming a means to include minority communities in national life and to provide monitoring. A necessary measure, this policy still has its risks. De-emphasizing central government may only delay the maturation of Kosovo's political culture. Few Kosovars participate in, or believe that they are beneficiaries of, local government (United Nations 2004a, 68). Moreover, in many areas, the process has met with little success. The Serbian government has refused to cooperate with initiatives involving the Serb minority. The post of deputy minister for local government administration, reserved for a Serb and crucial to the task of decentralization, was vacant for months owing to a drop in Serb participation (Jessen-Petersen 2005). Such local issues justify a continued international presence. Kosovo's Serb population is not alone in resisting the policy. Decentralization may appear a forerunner to partition in the eyes of many Albanians, which leads to more anger at UNMIK. The looming status question means that every policy will be interpreted from the standpoint of Kosovo's future independence rather than based on the merits of the policy. Few policy initiatives can thus move forward until the issue is resolved.

The future of Kosovo's political institutions continues to be guided by their adherence to, and ability to implement, the Kosovo Standards Implementation Plan, a UN plan that includes the development of free and fair elections, equality under the law, freedom of movement, sustainable returns, rights of communities, economic development and dialogue with Belgrade (United Nations 2004b). The plan will likely remain relevant even if independence is granted, as such status is bound to be conditional and premised on the furtherance of these aims. While international organizations have managed the three elections to date, a central electoral commission will run future contests (OSCE 2005a, 1). The PISG must be prepared for these responsibilities. Kosovo's current political situation thus underlines the need for a two-pronged solution to the problems plaguing the region. Its status must be firm enough to provide a foundation for governance, yet flexible enough to include a continuing international presence and guidance. While one may hope that local institutions will eventually share in the burden of

quelling unrest and guaranteeing proper representation, they currently lack the strength and independence that would allow them to do so. Even though the PISG must be given more power and flexibility to test its abilities, political engagement by the international community in the region remains necessary.

In order to truly address the issues raised by the weakness of Kosovo's current institutions, pursuing a 3-D orientation is crucial. Such an approach allows governments to support all areas of governance, labour toward a broad sense of stability and foster cooperation. One could even extend 3-D's scope to include civil society, the private sector and policy actors, which must all be engaged in building Kosovo's political infrastructure. At the same time, there are obvious, clear limits to 3-D: no international mission, however broad its mandate, commitment and capabilities, can adequately replace the government demanded by the region's population long after the end of conflict.

Kosovo's political institutions are thus still in flux. The region is not yet ready to assume control of its own destiny because of competing, seemingly irreconcilable differences over what its future should be. The inability to mediate between these viewpoints arises from flaws in the system as much as from the uncertain status of the government. Serb Kosovars may foster the hope that the PISG, built on a shaky foundation, will topple and allow Belgrade to resume control. They may also be unwilling to participate in a system they fear discriminates against minorities. On the other end of the spectrum, a paradox lies in the fact that Albanian Kosovars, frustrated over their government's slow development, often blame the international presence and disengage from politics, heightening desire for a resolution while impairing the likelihood of one in the near future.

Breaking the Calm: The March 2004 Violence

In March 2004, after some years of relative peace, violence flared across Kosovo. While such rioting is rare, a UN poll found that 21.8 percent of Kosovars had participated in public protest; it was their most significant form of public engagement (United Nations 2004a, 141). According to the NGO Human Rights Watch, the outburst initially occurred at the local level, spurred by animosity and by three imperfectly documented incidents. The first was the nonfatal shooting of Jovica Ivic, allegedly by ethnic Albanians. The next day, three organizations associated with the former insurgent Albanian Kosovo Liberation Army held major protests against the arrest of former KLA leaders. Finally, on the same afternoon, a media report surfaced containing the dubious claim that three Albanian

children had been chased into a river by Serbs and drowned (Bouckaert 2004, 15-20). That such local events could bring on a regional crisis underscored the depth of enmity in Kosovo and the fragility of its peace.

The divided city of Mitrovica was the site of the worst conflict. Each side allegedly masqueraded as the other and attacked UNMIK and KFOR personnel. By the time the situation calmed, 19 people were dead, nearly 1,000 were injured, 4,500 were internally displaced, over 700 homes had been torched and 30 Serbian Orthodox churches had been destroyed (ICG 2005, i). The Human Rights Watch report estimated that there were at least 33 major riots over the space of those two days, with over 50,000 participants (Bouckaert 2004, 1). The Serbs and other minorities, such as the Roma and Ashkali communities, were the principal targets of the anger and violence.

The extent and severity of the hostilities surprised many in the international community, causing them to react forcefully. The United Kingdom alone sent nearly 1,000 troops to bolster its dwindling force in the region ("British Troops" 2004). The fighting quieted down rapidly. While the March violence merely broke an illusion of stability, its implications were dangerous to the stability of the region. Both the International Crisis Group and Human Rights Watch reported that the incidents suggested KFOR and UNMIK had lost some credibility by failing to stop the violence immediately. They may have also lost some of their power to deter extremists intent on causing harm. In particular, public opinion likely turned against UNMIK. Polls showed that in March 2004, only 24.9 percent of Kosovars were satisfied with UNMIK and 32.4 percent with the SRSG, while 73.9 percent liked the government and 84.9 percent the Kosovo Police Service (United Nations 2004a, 50). Such widespread ill feeling can only erode the will to work toward an even-handed solution if it is not addressed quickly.

However, the events also sparked a new determination to solve Kosovo's problems, leading to greater scrutiny among international organizations and NGOs. At a great cost, they brought the two sides of the conflict closer to moral equivalency in the eyes of some Western officials, forcing those officials to listen more intently to Belgrade and to Serb concerns. The Kosovo Standards Implementation Plan, released shortly after the end of the violence, called for a status review in mid-2005, a process that has been launched by the United Nations at long last. The concurrent efforts of NGOs to ensure that the region remained on national agendas bore considerable fruit after these incidents. There was no doubt that the events of March 2004 had cracked Kosovo's deceptive, leading to disturbing outcomes in the elections later that year.

Julian Wright

A Loss of Faith

The climate of discontent drove minorities away from the central government and allowed Serbia to openly intervene in the region's politics. Viewed by many as the instigator of the 1999 conflict owing to former president Milosevic's aggressive policies, the Balkan state began to garner somewhat more international sympathy as Serbs were targeted. In the aftermath of the March violence, then-president Vojislav Kostunica called on the Serbian population in Kosovo to boycott the election (De Quettevillle 2004). His rationale for doing so did include concerns about security, but his call to abstention was also rooted in a fear of making legitimate a process regarded as an Albanian ploy for independence.

While the elections went smoothly, the participation rate was troubling: less than 1 percent of the Serbian population voted ("Rugova Triumphs" 2004). Because of a mandated minimum of Serbian seats in the 120-member assembly, some seats remained in Serbian hands, but none of these were assigned in a conventional manner. Rather, their distribution was based on small and unrepresentative electoral numbers. By comparison, the outgoing assembly had 22 seats for the Coalition Return, a Serbian group whose aim was to reinstate the region's status in Serbia and Montenegro. Serbs had actively participated in the previous election, hoping to gain clout in determining the region's future. Even if they were effectively opposed to the premise of a central Kosovo government, they were nevertheless taking part in it. Serb reluctance to participate in the electoral system demonstrated that integration was not progressing adequately in Kosovo. Albanians could do little to convince them to participate, especially when Belgrade had an opposing message. As with the March 2004 violence, this was merely the most extreme example of a long-standing trend. The number of non-voters had already tripled between the 2000 and 2002 municipal elections (United Nations 2004a, 63).

In other respects, Kosovo showed greater political maturity after the 2004 election. The 2001 contest had brought months of stalemate and failed attempts to build a coalition. In this case, an agreement was reached only two weeks after the results were finalized. Of course, this success was tempered by the fact that participation levels, especially by Serbs, were so low. Kosovo faced a new challenge when its prime minister, Ramush Haradinaj, was indicted for war crimes earlier in the year. The smooth transition from his rule to that of the new head of government, Bajram Kosumi, was another sign of progress, especially in light of the anger that had met the previous indictment of an Albanian.

Despite progress, political tension persists. On March 15, 2005, Kosovo's president, Ibrahim Rugova, was the victim of an assassination attempt involving

a remote-controlled bomb placed in a dustbin. Only one year earlier, a grenade had been thrown at his residence from a passing vehicle. In what has become a familiar cycle, more troops were sent to the region for deterrence. A series of three bombings targeting the United Nations, the OSCE and the Kosovo Assembly in early July underscored the continued danger (Wood 2005). There is no stronger sign of general frustration than this simultaneous targeting of Kosovo's ruling institutions. Within their restricted set of parameters, Kosovo's institutions are fast improving. On a larger scale, however, much remains to be done. The first step is to define Kosovo.

The Paralysis over Status

For years, a resolution has seemed out of the international community's reach. Kosovo has languished in an imposed standards-before-status limbo based on the onerous conditions under which a final decision would be made. An August 2004 report to the United Nations by Norwegian diplomat Kai Eide quoted an Albanian student lamenting, "You gave us freedom but not a future" (Eide 2004). This desperation, which continues today, can be linked to the impasse over the status question. While it would be reductionist to suggest that an appropriate status resolution would solve every issue listed here, there is a mounting consensus among scholars, national governments, international organizations and NGOs that the long-standing approach has been ineffective. A recent report by the International Commission on the Balkans, a panel of experts and European former politicians studying the future of the region, concluded, "The status quo has outlived its usefulness" in Kosovo (ICB 2005, 8). The current ambiguity has caused tension among Albanians tired of waiting and Serbs afraid that independence is a reality that has already been imposed on them without consultation. The approach may have kept the region at peace, but it has also consigned it to an endless state of transition.

As progress toward a final status is made, the region's situation remains indeterminate. Under international law, Kosovo is a province of Serbia. Albania has recognized it as an independent state for over a decade. As described previously, the reality is somewhere in between: Kosovo is the protectorate of a coalition of international organizations. Serbs want to rejoin Serbia and Montenegro, where they would be in the majority, while Albanians will stop at nothing to create an independent country. Other minorities, such as the Roma, are caught in the middle of the conflict, often ignored and left out of the political process. The less Kosovo's diverse groups participate in the interim government's politics, the less effective and

legitimate that government appears. This delays the resolution of the status issue, as many believe that Kosovo must be an inclusive, open society before it can self-govern. Partitioning, or even implementing a federal state, would be contentious, although the parallel structures in Serbian areas force the international community to recognize it as a real possibility. This renders the international presence and mediation continually necessary. Were the region left to its own devices, it is unlikely a resolution of status would come without more bloodshed.

Conditional independence may be the only option in the coming talks. Public opinion favours it. Most Albanians, who make up the majority of Kosovars, will accept nothing other than independence. Inertia also plays a part. Kosovo has been functioning as an independent state for years, and a reversion to its previous status would be very difficult. Pristina and Belgrade's dialogue is not sufficiently evolved for a balanced resolution. Serbia's proposed solution, issued in a report titled *A Plan for the Political Solution to the Situation in Kosovo and Metohija*, did little to open dialogue, focusing as it did primarily on the independence and autonomy of Serb-populated regions of Kosovo with little regard for contact with Albanian society and to the broader context of the conflict (Serbia and Montenegro Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2004). As the report indicates, there is no doubt that Serb communities deserve a degree of autonomy in conducting their affairs, but significant concessions on Serbia's claims to Kosovo are also necessary. For its part, the constitutional framework did little to address the question of status. It defined Kosovo as an "undivided territory" and an "entity with unique attributes" "composed of municipalities," leaving considerable ambiguity to be resolved through later negotiations (UNMIK 2001b).

The next phase of Kosovo's progress toward defined status is the current review by the United Nations and the upcoming talks involving all parties. In October, the secretary-general of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, gave his blessing to the resumption of serious talks on the region's future. Nicholas Burns, the US undersecretary of state for political affairs and a former permanent representative to NATO, publicly backed speeding the process by announcing that negotiations would begin later in 2005 and that they should be led by a senior European figure assisted by an American (Dobbins 2005). This strategy was confirmed with the appointment of Martti Ahtisaari, a former president of Finland and one of the main brokers of the peace deal with Belgrade that ended the 1999 conflict ("UN Chooses" 2005). The stated American principle of looking for a majority consensus implies that Americans would support Kosovo independence. There may be a resolution by mid-2006 — not a moment too soon.

The crisis over the status quo is partly a matter of perception and lost trust. All locals feel left out of the process. Lacking credible alternatives, they are forced

into the destructive pessimism that led to the March 2004 violence and to the drop in minority participation. To fight this pessimism, the review must be linked to a concrete commitment to action. Those involved must not expect the parties to come to a resolution by themselves, nor must they allow the talks to go on indefinitely. This would create a situation analogous to the status quo. In light of this reality and the potential fallout of any decision on final status, there exists a range of options for moving forward and tempering the results of the status process, whatever they may be. With all of these options, 3-D may provide a useful guide.

Moving Forward: Policy Options for Canada and the World

As Kosovo's current state suggests, whatever the results of the review and the eventual decision, true stability in the region may be years away. A single decision at UN headquarters will not guarantee an optimal outcome. One must consider not only the eventual results of the status process, but also what steps must be taken to integrate the region into the international community and solve the instability inherent in that section of the Balkans. As stated before, Canada's integrated policy may prove a useful guide to the resolution to, and the fallout from, such a decision; it could provide Ottawa with an opportunity to lead in a region where it has already obtained considerable success. At the same time, it can only go so far. The 3-D policy is no substitute for genuine stability and a homegrown political infrastructure, which is demanded by Kosovo's citizens.

For once, resources are not the principal problem. While Canada was at one time an eager participant in Kosovo, only a handful of Canadian advisers remain in the headquarters of the international contingent. Kosovo already has a large number of troops on its territory. There is no immediate need for more, although Canadian Forces should stand ready to intervene should there be fallout from the resolution of the status question. Despite a continuing shortage of military personnel, Canada truly made a difference in Kosovo, highlighting the fact that allies and a holistic approach can act as force multipliers when properly applied.

If appropriately targeted at building a market economy and opportunity, increased aid would be helpful. However, given the unproven efficiency of the PISG and the already considerable amounts of aid flowing into the region, Canada must be highly selective in its assistance. A focus on building a market economy will help status, returns and security all at once. The 3-D policy is a helpful means of analyzing the success of such aid operations. If it helps improve

security, political stability and economic conditions all at once, then Canadian involvement will have been be worthwhile.

The police gap must continue to be addressed. Although international police forces are not as crucial as trained Kosovo ones, Canada can make a significant contribution on the ground with its experienced police units. The RCMP has been involved in peacekeeping operations for well over a decade and represents one of Canada's great contributions to world security. As a member of the OSCE, the organization responsible for the Kosovo Police School (KPS), Canada should also help support the development of homegrown police capabilities in Kosovo. At the same time, it will have to monitor very closely the ethnic balance of the Kosovo Police Service to ensure its neutrality. The program has shown early signs of success. With nearly 350 new officers, the May 2005 graduating class was the largest in the school's history (OSCE 2005b, 3). The KPS is taking control of troubled regions from KFOR. But optimism is balanced with concern that the police service may lack the capacity for managing a crisis like the March 2004 violence, due to a shortage of equipment and to occasional conflict with KFOR (Bouckaert 2004, 20-6).

The most important initiative for Canada to back is the further integration of Kosovo into the international community — assuming that Kosovo is allowed to follow the road to independence. Status, of course, is crucial for full membership in any international organization, but it is increasingly apparent that these issues should be tied together and addressed simultaneously. Given the proven benefits of engagement on the European continent, the EU and NATO "carrots" are essential to reform.

The 3-D approach is premised on the assumption that no single agency or organization can do everything. The Department of National Defence alone can not fulfill Canada's objectives. NATO intervened without the United Nations' blessing, only to have the UN head the reconstruction effort with its EU and OSCE partners. Ottawa thus cannot be picky about who it works with. The United Nations is a valuable partner, but it is not the only possible partner in the mission to secure a bright future for Kosovo. It will be impossible to complete the region's transition without a broad, multilateral effort, much like the original allied force. Ottawa faces a crucial challenge: to convince its allies to engage Kosovo and situations like it with an integrated, open-minded, 3-D-like approach.

As a NATO member, Canada could advocate guarantees for Kosovo based on the peaceful resolution of the status process. The NATO Partnership for Peace, a loose program focused on interoperability and defence cooperation, and its political equivalent, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, would be ideal starting places, offering the possibility of eventual full membership. Stability is not a crucial factor, as troubled countries such as Belarus, Moldova and Uzbekistan are members of both organizations. In turn, integrating Kosovo will mean offering

similar incentives to Serbia so that the move is not perceived as threatening. The prospect of NATO membership could further de-escalate tensions in the region through security guarantees. For NATO, successfully integrating the former belligerents of its only offensive military operation would be a considerable accomplishment.

This will not be easy. NATO is feeling pressure due to its expansion to become a much larger organization and may be slow to move forward. Depending on the progress of the talks, Russia could raise even more objections to Kosovo's inclusion in NATO than it did to the recent accession of former Soviet Bloc states, although a concomitant partnership with Serbia would help ease its doubts. It is clear that full admission for such an unstable region with anything but a long-term time horizon would have security implications too serious to consider. Promises based on appropriate behaviour will have to do.

The European Union case is more complex and growing ever more so due to domestic concerns. In its current incarnation, the EU can only absorb viable states, and there is little possibility of a concrete partnership-in-training. With an increasing focus on the security of the EU's boundaries, officials will be wary of introducing a weak state into the its midst. Kosovo is already problematic for the EU because of its potential for fostering illegal migrants and international crime. Improving Kosovo to accord with the justice and home affairs portfolio in addition to the usual economic standards will be crucial. It currently falls far below par on both sets of criteria. The disastrous results of the Dutch and French referenda on the EU constitution also mean that EU officials will be far less open to expansion than they have been in the past. A number of prominent commentators have expressed concern over the risk of a resulting loss of focus on Europe's periphery (Daalder and Goldgeier 2005). The symbolism of a primarily Muslim proto-state with a history of conflict joining the EU will trouble many of the same inward-looking individuals who rail against Turkey's accession.

If Kosovo is to be brought into the EU, the model for accession must be radically modified. The most effective Kosovo exception might combine rapid incremental tradeoffs between standards and status, allowing Kosovo to build and integrate at the same time, and slowing accession down to a long series of small steps that nonetheless have a clear direction and end point. The first step in this process, as suggested by the International Commission on the Balkan's report, would be for the EU to gradually take over responsibilities from UNMIK in Kosovo and cooperate with KFOR troops on the ground, as it already has in Bosnia through EUFOR (ICB 2005, 21).

The fact that there will be significant cost, potential for embarrassment and danger means that the rest of the world must remain involved. While Canada

cannot do much more than urge the EU to act, it can offer its support to such an EU operation. The Kosovo status question is the single most important factor holding the region back from further integration with the rest of Europe. In fact, far from destabilizing the Balkans, Kosovo's independence will ultimately ensure long-term peace in the region. The only region that may be affected by its independence, according to the domino theory, is Montenegro, which already appears on the verge of separating and has been promised a referendum by 2006.

The international community must guide the process. In particular, the United States must remain active and focused on a solution. Despite its apparent enthusiasm for the process, the United Nations may not be able to summon the consensus for a definitive solution. Russia, with its long history of support for the Serbian side, will be difficult to convince on independence. China, another permanent Security Council member, has little interest in supporting independence anywhere. To adjust to these political realities, the International Commission on the Balkans report wisely proposed a phased transition plan to achieve future, not final, status, starting with independence with a reduced degree of sovereignty — leaving human rights and minority issues under the scrutiny of the international community — followed by guided sovereignty in partnership with the EU, and ending with full integration in the EU (ICB 2005, 20-3). Left out of the Contact Group, Canada will have little direct input in such decisions pertaining to the region's political future. It can, however, focus its support through NATO, the United Nations and the OSCE. Serbia's international status must necessarily be taken into account at the same time. Its integration through international structures is only marginally more advanced than Kosovo's. While this is a difficult, long-term plan, it is nevertheless one of the most promising approaches to a resolution for Kosovo.

Partners at the regional level will also be necessary. All sides must participate. The further degeneration of the situation into a Palestinian-style deadlock, where Serbs are isolated in Kosovo and held hostage to the whims of foreign capitals, must be avoided at all costs. The commission report suggests large incentives for Serb refugees to return in order to create a more balanced society, even if these refugees are unwilling to do so at first (ICB 2005, 22). Serbian parallel structures should be slowly incorporated into the broader society and Belgrade offered some compensation, despite the purported illegality of these structures. Serbia may also regard EU membership as an incentive to cooperate. It has already shown more good faith in collaborating with the war crimes tribunal, while its sovereign status and higher standard of living bring it closer to accession. EU accession will be crucial, because it makes the concept of a people trapped in a region inside national boundaries irrelevant.

Albanians both inside and outside Kosovo will also have to cooperate. Some claim that they will not stand for the creation of cantons in their region or any hint of Serbian cooperation, but these advocates may have to compromise. In concrete terms, special treatment must be given to volatile areas like Mitrovica and Tetovo to ensure the security of their residents and to acknowledge their particular status. Moreover, these areas have already been allowed to drift away from the PISG. Kosovo has nearly been partitioned already. Taking a hard line may not be sufficient to maintain territorial integrity. Political factionalism, stirred up by Haradinaj's indictment, must give way to a focus on the bigger picture. The granting of status must not remove the pressure to ensure minority rights and participation.

Railing against independence is a political necessity in Serbia, but this does not necessarily mean that it is more than lip service for some. In one example, Boris Tadic agreed to call for Serbs to vote in the Kosovo elections on the condition that parallel structures would be legitimized (ICG 2005, 17), showing a willingness to negotiate. The unconditional drive toward Albanian independence may also consist of a great deal of posturing. Rhetoric may run high, but both parties are exhausted and increasingly more concerned about their own economic and social well-being. If an equitable solution were to be proposed, it might meet with less resistance than expected. Neither group can claim the full moral high ground any longer.

The once-troubled region successfully held a second series of elections in late 2004, and it is on the path to a resolution of its ambiguous status through a United Nations review already underway. Whereas the opposing sides once waged war on each other, they now fight legal battles through the courts of The Hague or follow the United Nations process for status determination. This is already an accomplishment. The outlook for Kosovo is thus not as bleak as it may seem. However, it will take a great deal of diplomatic effort, and possibly even exceptions to the normal mode of operations of international institutions, at a particularly difficult time for the EU and the UN. The greatest challenge may be to keep Kosovo in the news so that it does not become, once again, a power vacuum on the periphery of Europe.

A clear signal from Belgrade to the Serbs is essential. In a May 2005 speech, the SRSG reported that Pristina and Belgrade are involved in talks on missing persons, displaced persons and energy for the first time since the March violence (Jessen-Petersen 2005). Simply emphasizing such success stories would go a long way toward achieving reconciliation. It is absolutely crucial to create an identity that goes beyond ethnic origin in Kosovo. There is no sense in creating the multicultural Kosovo that the international community has long pined for if this condition is not fulfilled. There can be no equilibrium without it. As one

report suggested, the international community should attempt to "graduate Kosovo as swiftly as possible into the club of nation states" (ICG 2005, 27).

Conclusion

The issues Kosovo has faced and still faces remain pertinent, especially as Canada embraces a 3-D approach to its international priorities. The Kosovo experience may provide helpful directives for bolstering the status of minorities, solving security concerns and creating a political system to be shared by all. Iraq is one recent example of a country facing similar issues. Much like Kosovo, the country is divided between two populations: a now-dominant Shiite one and a sizeable Sunni one. Continuing violence, ethnic tensions and the uncertain status of minorities have held up the transition to stability in Iraq. The Iraqi equivalent of the status question was determined by the extent to which the new constitution and its implementation could uphold a federal or centralized state. Iraqi elections were also highly reminiscent of those in Kosovo. A BBC report stated that turnout in some Sunni areas was lower than 2 percent due to an election boycott ("Q&A" 2005). As a consequence, Sunnis were shut out of the process, challenging the integrity of Iraqi politics. For some time, this allowed the two principal parties to form a majority government and circumvent much Sunni political involvement. Exploiting the situation, al-Qaeda continues to actively intimidate Sunnis into not participating in the country's political life.

Kosovo's challenges thus remain relevant. The Balkan region is still stuck in a loop. The talks on status are aimed at changing this reality. Under the set criteria, Kosovo cannot be granted status because its government is not fully developed along the lines imposed by the standards plan. In turn, the government's development is hindered by a weak economy and a lack of legitimacy. These factors are determined in great part by Kosovo's current ambiguous status as a ward of the international community. The situation is not drastic, but the involved parties cannot solve it entirely by themselves. Political leadership is required to break the deadlock, to exert pressure on the relevant players and to keep Kosovo in the news. Representative institutions and fair constitutions are not sufficient. Nor are the mere commencement of talks and the opening of a negotiation process. The parties may not come to an agreement without the application of pressure, perhaps even coercion, on the part of the international community. Indeed, their inability to reach an agreement has made the region a hotbed of conflict for decades. Engagement by NATO allies and ongoing effort are required to maintain fragile progress in all postconflict states.

The Kosovo experience reinforces the basic lesson that interveners must not overlook the complex relationships in a weak state. It teaches that the imposition for too long of an unchanging outside administration may weaken, instead of strengthen, the organs of the state. Bringing that state together with its neighbours and regional powers is one path to success. Ensuring gradually that the state is the sole provider of services is crucial. Contributing to a genuine national identity is also important. The American "Coalition of the Willing" is not the only entity to have difficulty winning peace, as Kosovo proves. Nor are state-building difficulties an exclusive feature of the post-9/11 environment, especially in the Balkans. Perhaps most important of all, a robust economic strategy is required for a post-conflict operation of such magnitude. Kosovo should be a relatively easy candidate compared to Iraq. Its economy has historically lagged only slightly behind that of the rest of the Balkans. The conflict has increased the gap substantially.

At the time of writing, Kosovo's independence appears a near certainty. When one compares its situation with other conflicts, what seems most frustrating is that the groundwork for a solution is within reach but has only now been approached. A United Nations and Contact Group–backed plan for rapid status resolution would magnify efforts to improve the economy, strengthen the provisional government and curb tension between diverse groups. Such a plan would work best in combination with incentives for integration into NATO and the European Union, even if only on a distant time horizon. Intensifying the training of security forces while monitoring their ethnic balance would allow for an eventual pullout of KFOR troops, a possible transition to an EU-led force and more responsibilities for the Kosovo government.

There may be a few lingering doubts about independence. Decision-makers do not want to convey the impression that violence, such as the March 2004 riots, brings rewards in the form of international appeasement. Yet the world's newly found motivation does not merely come from a desire to placate those responsible. In fact, these events forced the world to face the responsibilities it assumed in 1999 on the occupation of Kosovo. As this paper suggests, the sluggish progress of the international community is partly to blame for these recent events, thus justifying its motivation in examining Kosovo with renewed vigour. Moreover, the international community must take the situation as it stands, not as it wishes it to be. Wrongs have been committed on both sides. It is in everyone's interest that "neither side emerge as the loser," as Undersecretary of State Burns aptly put it (Burns 2005). The object should be to put Kosovo on the path to resolving its problems, not to determine who is at fault by reviewing decades of history.

Granting Kosovo definitive status will not solve all of its problems. However, there is no doubt that it will aid progress. Some issues, such as the weakness of the central government, are directly dependent on the resolution of status. For others, the connection

is more abstract. There is a tendency to blame all problems, from the intractability of the various ethnic groups to economic underperformance, on the status question. Removing this hindrance will empower those who wish to address these problems and force those who merely complain to assume the responsibility that follows from citizenship. The ultimate concern for these affairs must rest with Kosovo's people.

At each of these stages, Canada could lend support and advice. On a military and civilian security level, there remains room for Canada to make a further contribution to the region. Embracing a 3-D approach entails involvement with a new range of allies — as broad as possible while remaining relevant — as well as with agencies tailored to the situation. Such missions are best carried out with a diverse coalition of national, international and nongovernmental actors. Kosovo allows Canadians to reinterpret 3-D through a wider lens. It is more than an approach; it is the goal of addressing all the challenges presented by a postconflict state in the context of the American-led War on Terror and of a world that now acknowledges a responsibility to protect. The 3-D policy seeks to place such a region on a suitable footing to resume its cultural, economic and political life. It also enlists allies and organizations to adopt and implement it. Most importantly, it symbolizes the long-term commitment Canada extends when it becomes involved in a region. Beyond short-term military involvement and medium-term stabilization operations, 3-D is a comprehensive partnership with regions in recovery from conflict that is tailored to their economic, political and security needs. Resources must be allocated accordingly. This may mean sacrificing interventions favoured by current public opinion for the sake of Canada's longer-term interests and commitments. It also means that there is a need for a well-structured procurement scheme built on the capabilities called for by 3-D, including the ability to airlift troops and equipment, as well as to sustain a robust force for a considerable amount of time. There are no quick fixes. To devote anything less would be to leave Kosovo in an uneasy balance between a troubled past and a stable future, a position it has held for too long.

In the RAND study cited earlier, the authors argued that staying power helps ensure success in postconflict transition (Dobbins et al. 2003). Tremendous effort has been put into Kosovo, and this will have to continue even if the status issue is resolved appropriately. The strategy for Kosovo must include both military and economic support. It must be premised on a firm future status and balanced by stringent conditions. The process must also begin immediately. The hazy state of affairs allowing each side to ignore the other's concerns must not endure. Any one of these strategies alone will not bring success. In the years ahead, in terms of the international community's involvement in Afghanistan and Iraq as well as the elaboration of the Canadian 3-D policy combining defence, development and diplomacy, leadership will remain essential to tie everything together.

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