A conflict analysis

Macedonia
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<tr>
<td>ANA</td>
<td>Albanian National Army</td>
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<tr>
<td>ARI</td>
<td>Army of the Republic of Ilirida</td>
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<tr>
<td>COMECON</td>
<td>The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (dissolved)</td>
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<tr>
<td>DA</td>
<td>Democratic Alternative</td>
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<tr>
<td>DPA</td>
<td>Democratic Party of Albanians (also known as PDSh, its Albanian-language acronym)</td>
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<tr>
<td>DUI</td>
<td>Democratic Union for Integration (also known as BDI, its Albanian-language acronym)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kfor</td>
<td>The Kosovo Force</td>
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<tr>
<td>KLA</td>
<td>Kosovo Liberation Army</td>
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<tr>
<td>LDP</td>
<td>Liberal Democratic Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>LP</td>
<td>Liberal Party</td>
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<td>NDP</td>
<td>National Democratic Party</td>
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<td>NLA</td>
<td>National Liberation Army</td>
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<tr>
<td>OSCE</td>
<td>Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDP</td>
<td>Party for Democratic Prosperity</td>
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<tr>
<td>PDSh</td>
<td>Democratic Party of Albanians</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDSM</td>
<td>Social Democratic Alliance of Macedonia</td>
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<td>SPM</td>
<td>Socialist Party of Macedonia</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNMIK</td>
<td>The United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo</td>
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<tr>
<td>VMRO-DPMNE</td>
<td>Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization – Democratic Party of Macedonian National Unity</td>
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The purpose of this conflict analysis, commissioned by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, is to assess the short-term risks of renewed, large-scale inter-ethnic violence in Macedonia. Events during the period January 2001 – May 2003, and their possible impact on conflict dimensions in the country, are in main focus in this study. From international, national, and local perspectives critical developments in the areas of security, politics, and socio-economy are identified and discussed. The risk profile thus outlined forms the basis for three different conflict scenarios.

Various information sources have been used in the preparation of this report. A perusal of key works on the contemporary history of Macedonia was followed by discussions with a number of individuals with expert knowledge in Macedonia as well as in Sweden. During a fact-finding mission in Skopje in late October, 2002 talks were held with diplomats and high-ranking officials of international organizations. Leading Macedonian politicians and journalists as well as human rights activists and academics also provided much valuable information (see Annex A). The desk study has included a continual monitoring of developments as reported by international media.

Responding to the question if he is optimistic or pessimistic about future developments in his strained country, one local interlocutor sighed: “Optimistic – I see no option.”

Skopje, Autumn 2002
Executive Summary

A conflict assessment on Macedonia must take into consideration the social, economic and political complexities of the Balkan region itself as well as the complexities pertaining to the strategies, resources and perseverance of an international community which is committed to crisis management and peace-building in many parts of the world.

Though not down-playing the important permissive conditions of recurrent ethnic strife in Macedonia, this analysis puts special focus on some positive developments that may give rise to some guarded optimism.

First, as is generally acknowledged, the various actors of the international community function in a coordinated and efficient way in Macedonia. The record is not flawless, but, in the aggregate, their efforts have produced very good results, among which the Peace Agreement signed in Ohrid in August 2001 signifies a landmark; this important event, it should be stressed, also testified to the statesmanship of some of Macedonia’s political leaders. The agreement tapered interethnic violence, and resulted in a new constitution, which formally acknowledges ethnic-Albanian rights.

A second positive factor concerns the citizens’ determination. Despite the fact that the election campaign could not steer clear of ethnic violence, the turnout on election day, September 15, 2002 exceeded 73%. In an election characterized by international observers as largely orderly and fair the SDSM led by Branko Crvenkovski and the DUI led by ex-rebel leader Ali Ahmeti triumphed. The votes for Crvenkovski and Ahmeti (who both support the Ohrid agreement) may be interpreted as votes against political extremism. Consistent with this view is the recent news about the disbandment of the “Lions”. Moreover, this may be indicative of a successful strategy to sideline elite groups on both sides of the conflict who have been politically and economically disadvantaged by the peace agreement.

Although many ethnic Macedonians are sceptical or apprehensive of Ahmeti’s “transformation”, others regard it as an opportunity for increased stability and improved ethnic relations. Indeed, it may be argued that the transformation of military actors to political actors is a prerequisite for democratization in conflict-ridden states.

The newly elected political leadership is thus mandated by a majority of the Macedonian citizens to enact and implement reforms that will im-
prove living conditions in the country. There are many obstacles on this long road – or, as one interlocutor put it: “It took Macedonia many years to end up in this bad situation, and it will take her as many years to reach a good situation. Macedonians do not expect that everything will improve over-night, but, at least, they want to see some small steps in the right direction very soon.” The general mood of disappointment and even hopelessness pervading in Macedonia, has, to a large extent, been caused by the staggering corruption and incompetence of the previous government; unfulfilled promises have kept vast numbers of people unemployed causing them persistent economic problems. Thus, opinion polls have clearly shown that the first priority of the new government should be to address the tremendous problems of unemployment and corruption. As these intersect with the interethic frictions, progress in solving them will also decrease the potential for ethnic violence. Attempting to gauge the likelihood of socio-economic improvements some international analysts take a more positive view and point to the genuine will and dedication already displayed by several members of the new government.

Recognizing that the media had become part of the spiral of violence during the crisis in 2001, Macedonian journalists have taken steps to improve standards; it is expected that self-criticism will result in a higher degree of objectivity and professionalism in the accounts of the journalists of the different language media.

The commitment of the international community is crucial to stability in Macedonia; it is difficult to envisage a successful implementation of the peace agreement without sustained international support. As the uncertainty regarding the future status of Kosovo makes Macedonia vulnerable to renewed ethnic fighting, the international actors will be watchful of negative external factors, and its resolute preventive action will prove effective in the future.

Consequently, in the short run, incendiaries’ attempts to exploit the vulnerability of Macedonia and to capitalise on mutual ethnic resentment to cause increased tensions between the groups are not likely to succeed.
Small and landlocked, but with great geostrategic importance, Macedonia has in modern times often needed the protection of external powers for its survival. Continuously, its sovereignty remains largely dependent on the protection it can get from international law.

Although Macedonia reached its independence peacefully in 1991, the “newborn” state had some characteristic weaknesses. Its undeveloped institutions lacked the capacity to maintain full control of the territory, on which a large minority of people of a distinct culture was concentrated in the sensitive border areas in the north-west.

Having been the poorest among the republics in the Yugoslav federation, Macedonia started its independence on a stagnant economy. The poor economic situation was further deteriorated by the repercussions of the UN sanctions on Yugoslavia during 1992 – 1996 and the Greek embargo imposed on Macedonia as a punishment for the “name appropriation”.

Albanian Grievances

At the core of the grievances of the ethnic Albanians lie perceptions of being looked upon as second-class citizens. Manifestations of their disaffections became apparent on several occasions during the 1990s; in 1991 the ethnic Albanians boycotted the referendum on independence as well as the population census and in January 1992 they held their own referendum on territorial autonomy; during 1993 they formed a paramilitary organization and in 1994 they contested the population census;1 in February 1995 they opened an Albanian-language university in Tetovo; in the summer of 1997 they hoisted the Albanian flag on public buildings in the towns of Gostivar and Tetovo.2

Their persistent expressions of grievances notwithstanding, the ethnic Albanians’ conditions in Macedonia are no doubt far better than those of other minorities in the region. Since Macedonia’s independence the ethnic Albanians are represented in the central government. Further-

1 Allegedly, a group of ethnic Albanians, including some high-ranking politicians, formed a paramilitary organization in November 1993. According to official claims, the organization was in possession of large amounts arms and ammunition, which were to be used in a struggle to create the republic of “Ilirida”. Members of the organization were accused and sentenced to imprisonment, though by August 1, 1995 all had been released or given amnesty. Ackermann, p. 90, Poulton, pp. 196–197, Human Rights Watch 1996, A Threat to “Stability” – Human Rights Violations in Macedonia. http://www.hrw.org/reports/1996/Macedonia.htm. Accessed on November 20, 2002.

2 For a detailed description see Poulton, pp. 184–201.
more, they are governed by Albanian mayors in municipalities where they are in the majority. A considerable number of books and papers are published in Albanian, and several radio and TV channels broadcast in Albanian. Macedonian is the official language of the republic, however in places where a non-Macedonian ethnic group constitute a majority the language of that group has official status. Consequently, Albanian is the main official language in the western part of Macedonia as well as in some districts of the capital. In these areas, moreover, Albanian is the medium of instruction in primary and secondary schools.3

For its standards of minority rights guarantees Macedonia has received international plaudits, and, in an otherwise turbulent and violent environment, it has become known as “an oasis of peace”, where ethnic groups are living separated, albeit in relative contentment.4 As it is highly conceivable that such recognition had a positive influence on the Macedonians’ self-perceptions, it is as understandable that many were stunned when ethnic violence erupted in early 2001.

The security crisis in 2001

In February 2001, ethnic Albanian rebels calling themselves soldiers of the National Liberation Army (NLA) fighting for greater political and economic rights took control of Tanusevci village on the Kosovo-Macedonia border. This aggression started a series of violent clashes in various spots between NLA and Macedonian security forces which lasted for about seven months and resulted in more than 200 casualties and about 180 000 displaced people.5

The rebellion seriously deteriorated the overall security situation in the country. As ethnic violence spread, the government handed out arms to paramilitary groups and citizens of the ethnic Macedonian community. The Macedonian army – poorly equipped and inadequately trained – was mobilised and the government asked for international support and protection. The international community strongly condemned the use of extremist violence and declared that the ethnic Albanians must cease their actions and withdraw. Neighbouring states denounced the aggression and offered Macedonia their support.6 To give an impetus to a quick solution to the crisis a wider government coalition of the five major government and opposition parties was formed in mid-May.

The Ohrid Agreement

As the international community feared that the fighting could escalate to civil war, the United States and Europe sent envoys to initiate peace talks to achieve a political solution to the crisis, and on August 13, after a period of intense talks amidst inter-communal violence, the leaders of

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3 Magnusson, p. 4-5.
4 Gauging the potentials of the ex-Yugoslavia regimes, the “Badinter Commission” of the European Council” concluded in the beginning of 1992 that only Macedonia and Slovenia met the conditions for immediate state recognition. Also, having ratified the EU Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, the Macedonians’ record is even better than that of some EU states. Dulic, March 26, 2001.
5 About 80 000 were displaced in Macedonia, and about the same number found shelter with their kin in Kosovo. Approximately 20 000 fled to other neighbouring countries. UNHCR, Skopje, November 1, 2002.
the two communities could sign a peace agreement (see Annex A). Signing the Agreement, most importantly, the parties unconditionally rejected violence as a means to achieving political goals and agreed that the unitary character of the Macedonian state with its multi-ethnic society must be preserved.

In September Nato’s “Task Force Harvest” collected arms and ammunition voluntarily turned over by the NLA. Exceeding its target, according to Nato, the operation collected 483 machine guns and 3,210 assault rifles in addition to tanks/APCs weapon systems mines, explosives, and ammunition. Ethnic Macedonians, many harbouring long-standing anti-Nato sentiments, derided “the Harvest” and angrily protested that the NLA had handed over only a small portion of their arms (some of which were old pieces valuable only to a museum curator).

After an election campaign marred by a series of violent incidents, elections to the 120-member Sobranie were held on September 15, 2002. More than 73% of the 1.6 million eligible voters cast their ballots under tight security and close international observation. The elections – generally described as peaceful and fair – resulted in a clear victory for the opposition (see Annex B).

Admitting defeat the Prime Minister Ljubco Georgievski of the VMRO-DPMNE congratulated the winners and stated that the elections had been more democratic than the previous ones. Likewise, Arben Xhaferi of the PDSH, which lost heavily to the DUI, congratulated the victors and gave promises of help in the future. This sudden display of “dignity” and “democratic behaviour” on the part of the losers, it has been intimated, was enforced through Western arm-twisting.

With a 72/28 vote the Sobranie in October 2002 approved the new government, in which the DUI party led by the former KLA chief, Ali Ahmeti, was given four ministries, viz. health, education, justice, and transport & communication (see Annex C). Initially, Ali Ahmeti and his associates posed a political dilemma for Together for Macedonia, as there was strong opposition against letting Albanian “rebels” and “terrorists” take part in decisions controlling the fates of Macedonians.

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7 The agreement was signed by Ljubco Georgievski of VMRO-DPMNE, Branko Crvenkovski of SDSM, Arben Xhaferi of DPA, and Imer Imeri of PDP.


9 See for example Eldrige, p. 67.

(accessed on November 11, 2002)

The establishment of an EU military arm, Rapid Reaction Force, underscores the recognition that Balkan problems are EU problems and that the western European policy of active involvement in peace-building in the region will be maintained to prevent renewed fighting which may cause death as well as displacements of populations and dislocations of economies. On March 31, 2003 EU’s Operation Concordia replaced NATO’s peacekeeping mission, signifying a wider European responsibility for stability and reconstruction in Macedonia, as the US is taking a back-seat position. The Operation’s 320 lightly armed troops and 80 civilian staff shall contribute to Macedonia’s stability and security (helping its citizens to build a peaceful, democratic and prosperous country). With such a great task set for the operation, it is likely that its six-month term, ending in September, will be extended. Whereas ethnic Macedonian politicians are showing some restraint on the issue of a renewed mandate, leaders of DUI opine that a continued Operation Concordia will be propitious for the implementation of the Ohrid Agreement.

Security based on effective rule of law in all parts of the country is a prerequisite of Macedonia’s integration into the EU. Balkan aspirations to join the Euro-Atlantic community hold good possibilities for an amelioration of inter-ethnic relations in the region. As timetables and membership criteria are set, with a view to securing an early engagement of aspirant states, conditions conducive to groups’ peaceful coexistence will be created. Candidacy enhancement will depend on states’ steady improvements in the political, economic, and social fields. In the dynamics of such developments Euro-Atlantic institutions will find incentive/disin-
centive potentials for the promotion of stability and democracy in the region.

In a study carried out in 2001 by the Center for Strategic Research and Documentation, Skopje, a majority of the people interviewed thought that the international community played an important – if not essential – role not only in Macedonia’s economic development but also in the building of political stability in the Balkans. Without support from the international community, effective reforms for social improvement will not be implemented in Macedonia, according to most respondents; through the European integration many of Macedonia’s problems could be solved. While critical of the uncoordinated work of international actors and their poor understanding of local conditions, most respondents, significantly, stated that they trust the international community more than they trust Macedonia’s institutions and local authorities.

Regional factors

After the lifting of the Greek embargo in 1995, Macedonia’s relations with most of the neighbouring states are largely peaceful, although some important issues remain unsolved.

Following Tirana’s shift to a more moderate foreign policy, a diplomatic mission was opened in Skopje in 1993. Later an agreement on mutual cooperation was signed, and, in 1994, Albania opened the port of Durres for Macedonia to ease the consequences of the Greek embargo. The relations between the two countries have, with a few minor disagreements, remained peaceful; Albania is aware that instability in Macedonia will have negative repercussions in the whole region. Shared aspirations for NATO membership have recently enhanced the ties between the two countries.

Whereas Bulgaria was one of the first countries to recognize independent Macedonia, some disagreements strained their relations for several years. Mainly due to nationalist feelings, Bulgaria maintained that the Macedonian language is merely a Bulgarian dialect. Hence, Bulgaria did not acknowledge the existence of a separate Macedonian nation. In a 1999 compromise agreement between the two countries the language dispute was solved and the two sides abjured territorial claims on each other. The compromise is indicative of Bulgaria’s great interest in continued regional stability. The invitation to join NATO entails greater responsibility for Bulgaria to promote regional security. It may therefore be assumed that relations with Macedonia and other countries in the region will further improve in the near future.

After Dayton and the end of the war in Bosnia, Yugoslavia recognized independent Macedonia, although the unsolved question relating to the

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18 Balkan Public Agenda – An In-depth Interviews Study was sponsored by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance and carried out by FORUM – Center for Strategic Research and Documentation during the Macedonian crisis, in June 2001.
19 Balkan Public Agenda – An In-depth Interviews Study, p. 8. Commenting on the work of the international staff, critics have pointed out that neo-colonial and condescending attitudes have bred resentment in Macedonia. Dragdaht, p. 14.
20 Buechenschuetz, p. 1.
22 During the 2001 crisis Bulgaria, significantly, offered assistance to Macedonia. For a comment on the new outlook of Bulgaria’s foreign policy see for example the Institute of War and Peace Reporting, Balkan Crisis Report No. 384, November 21, 2002.
common borders continued to have a negative effect on their relations. However, signalling a wish for a rapprochement, Yugoslavia and Macedonia found a solution to this longstanding issue in February 2001.

The old dispute between the Serbian Orthodox Church and the Macedonian Orthodox Church regarding the independent status of the latter remains. However, increasingly, political leaders in both countries are concerned that this issue should not be allowed to deteriorate mutual relations.

The name issue

The dispute between Greece and Macedonia that broke out in 1991 essentially concerns the ownership of the cultural heritage of ancient Macedonia. Greece has objected to Macedonia’s “appropriation” of its name, the Vergina star on the flag, and the white tower (on Macedonian coins). Athens perceived the Skopje move as a provocation indicating expansionist ambitions. Athens also protested against a particular wording in Macedonia’s constitution, which could be interpreted as territorial claims toward the province of Macedonia in Greece.

Greeks see Macedonia as part of the soul of Hellenism, as “Alexander the Great and the ancient Macedonians were Greek and … ancient and modern Greece are linked in an unbroken line of racial and cultural continuity ….”

Greeks maintain that the ancient Macedonians were Greeks; so were their names, their gods and their language; and Alexander the Great was a Greek king who spread Hellenic civilization in large parts of the world.

From this perspective, the Macedonian nation is an “artificial creation” (of Tito’s Yugoslavia). Therefore, in official Greek terminology, the Republic of Macedonia is commonly known as the “Republic of Skopje”. To Greek nationalist hardliners, the Macedonian language is merely “an idiomatic form of Bulgarian”.

Except for the Turks in Thrace (commonly referred to as “Moslem Greeks”), there are no ethnic minorities in Greece, according to the official position; thus, there are no Slavs in Greece, only some “Slavophone Hellenes” who have a “Greek national consciousness”.

To the Macedonians, on the other hand, the name “Macedonia” is a vital component that has historically distinguished them from the Bulgarians. The Macedonians claim their “ethno specificity”: they are not Serbs, Yugoslavs, Bulgarians, or Greeks. They are a distinct ethnic group with a separate language and their land is a distinct geographical entity. According to moderate nationalists, neither Macedonia nor Greece can claim continuity with ancient Macedonia. They see Macedonians are a Slavic people with no relation to Alexander the Great. However, this position is opposed by Macedonian nationalist who, while refuting claims of Slavic descent, affirm the importance of Alexander the Macedon

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24 Danforth, p. 30 ff.
25 Greeks who adopt a more moderate stance term it "the linguistic idiom of Skopje".
26 Roudometof, p. 284
27 No such continuity exists; prior to the Great War Greeks constituted a minority in Greek Macedonia, and Thessalonica was largely Sephardic. Hellenization did not begin until after the Greco-Turkish war in the early 1920s. Magnusson, p. 7.
(as they call him) and the sun of Macedonia as powerful symbols of Macedonian continuity.29

The dispute over the name and the symbols deserves close attention, as it is part of a larger conflict involving historical experiences of threats and territorial claims in a regional context. In the 1990s the issue was frequently debated in various fora in Greece and Macedonia. In February and March 1992 the streets of many cities in Australia, Europe and North America were filled with hundreds of thousands of Greek demonstrators proclaiming, “Macedonia is Greek”.30 The subsequent strong diplomatic moves by Greece resulted in a temporary blocking of Macedonia’s eligibility for multilateral aid. More importantly, Greece’s embargo imposed on Macedonia in February 1992 (together with the UN embargo on Serbia) had severe effects on Macedonia’s economy.

Since the embargo imposed by Greece gradually worsened the economy of its own northern province, influential Greek businessmen started to advocate a rapprochement. In 1995 an interim agreement was reached. Greece lifted the embargo and Macedonia removed the Vergina star from its flag. Diplomatic relations between the two countries were established, and in 1996 when Costas Simitis became the new head of the Greek government mutual relations were strengthened, particularly in the economic field.31 Greek banking business as well as the Hellenic Petroleum Company increased their investments in Macedonia. An oil pipeline running from Thessalonica to Skopje – the largest energetics project in the Balkans – was officially opened in July 2002, although, for various reasons it is not yet in use.32

As Macedonian instability will threaten to disrupt vital trade routes and cause damage to Greek companies in Macedonia, it is likely that relations between the two countries will continue to improve.33

The Kosovo factor

Accounts of the causes of the crisis in Macedonia in 2001 commonly focus on the spill-over of violence from the Kosovo war; the US support for the Kosovars in their war against Serbian troops of the Milosevic regime emboldened KLA guerrillas to continue their fight on Macedonian soil.34

The situation in the Serbian province of Kosovo, still fraught with danger, may suddenly deteriorate and again challenge Macedonian security. The process of institution building and the transferring of responsibility is marred by disagreements between UNMIK and the Kosovo authorities on issues of political competence and authority. Talks on the future status of Kosovo will hardly be meaningful until democratic insti-

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29 Whereas Macedonians see the symbol as a sun, Greeks normally refer to it as a star.
30 Hate mongering in Greek media labelled Macedonians as “a people of criminals”, “bare-footed”, “barbarians”, and the like, which contributed to the inflamed passions displayed at the mass rallies held in Greece during 1992 and 1993.
32 Dimitras 1999, p. 1. Moreover, it is expected that Greece will invest large amounts of EU transfers to improve transportation links with Macedonia (and other Balkan states). EIU Viewswire, November 18, 2002. The Economist Intelligence Unit Ltd.
33 Economist Intelligence Unit – RiskWire Number 101, January 28, 2003. The Economist Intelligence Unit Ltd.
34 In Macedonians’ eyes, this unprovoked aggression achieved its aims with US backing, and, moreover, through reaching the Ohrid agreement, the Albanians demonstrated that “violence pays”.

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tutions and the rule of law have been established, and a number of other pertinent goals have been reached.35

Recent developments are disquieting and point to a deterioration of the security situation. The assassination of the Mayor of Suva Reka and the intimidation or even elimination of key witnesses in war crime cases are manifestations of entrenched intra-Albanian power struggles. Continuously, violence obfuscates the establishing of legal procedures and the rule of law in Kosovo, which, in the medium term, is likely to have a negative impact on Macedonia’s security.

Enhanced Regional Co-operation

Lately, Balkan states have taken a number of measures to enhance co-operation with a view to countering organized crime, which is considered to be one of the main threats to stability in the region, as proceeds from illicit business are being channelled into terrorist activities; concerted efforts by the Balkan states aiming at open and secure borders are underway with the support of the international community.36 Other positive developments include the building of Balkan networks linked to the process of integration into Euro-Atlantic institutions. (One example is “The Charter of the Adriatic 3” which will strengthen the co-operation between Croatia, Albania, and Macedonia with a view to improving their chances of an early entry into Nato.)

Internal security threats

As the origin of the 2001 crisis remains enigmatic, any analysis of today’s security situation in Macedonia will inevitably challenge criticism. The sinuous unrolling of events in 2001 gave rise to a plethora of speculations as to the real causes of the crisis. Rejecting the clear-cut thesis of inter-ethnic competition and antagonism, many commentators have advanced “fake war” explanations based on assumptions, such as:37

– a tacit agreement between the elites of both communities to divide the country and its spoils;
– an extension of criminal activities by groups of both communities;
– an Albanian strategy to enforce the international community to start talks on the final status of Kosovo;
– an incitement to the federalization of Macedonia;
– a mafia action to create regional instability – propitious to illicit trade
– a violent reaction to human rights violations.

Presumptions of this type are buttressed by the observation of an anomaly: the leaders of the four major political parties who signed the Ohrid Agreement of August 13, 2001 (i.e. the leaders of Macedonia’s four major political parties) were, ostensibly, not party to the violent conflict – indeed, they had all officially condemned the violence. On the other hand, Ali Ahmeti, whose signature is not on the Agreement, took

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Hislope (2002) analyses Macedonia’s security situation from the perspective of organised crime and argues that converging interests of the Albanian-led mafia and the liberation movement pose severe threats to the republic’s security. Taking advantage of the strategically important position of Macedonia, the mafia networks based in the north-western parts are in control of very lucrative criminal activities, such as smuggling of tobacco and drugs, money laundering and trafficking of humans.\footnote{It is estimated that the heroin taking the Balkan road is a $400 million/year business; this heroin accounts for 70–90% of the seizures in Europe. Hislope, p. 34.}

It has been pointed out that repression against the Albanians during the Yugoslav period kept them out of the state economy and forced them to adopt self-reliance strategies, some of which included illegal activities.\footnote{This view is supported by the leader of the DPA, Arben Xhaferi. Hislope, p. 35.} Kosovo Albanians set up underground organizations, which were linked to members of the Albanian Diaspora in Western Europe. Another important factor is the special Albanian culture with its large families and strong clan relations based on patriarchy, loyalty, and honour. This makes for strong cohesion preventing effective penetration by outsiders. Moreover, plenty of weapons got into the hands of these criminal organizations in Kosovo and Macedonia when Albanian arsenals were raided during the chaos following the collapse of communist rule. Members of the mafia could then enrich themselves by selling large quantities of these weapons together with petrol, oil, and other consumer goods to Yugoslavia as international sanctions were placed on her in 1992. Hislope concludes, “Albanian-populated villages in the lands where Macedonia, Kosovo, and southern Serbia meet became lawless zones of contraband smuggling”.\footnote{Hislope, p. 39.} The Albanian-led mafia operating in this area supported the build-up of NLA through weaponry and finances.

The greatest beneficiaries of Yugoslavia’s dissolution were the criminals, who, during the chaos of war, were able to expand their activities and establish cooperation throughout the Balkans. Glenny argues that the insurgency in Macedonia in fact was a transformation of inter-Albanian fighting for larger shares of the illicit trade of tobacco, oil and women.\footnote{Hislope, p. 39.} Hence, the concerns of the instigators of the violent eruption in 2001 had little to do with the improvement of the ethnic Albanians’ social situation in Macedonia. In support of Glenny’s argument, Petkovski maintains that the source of the violence was individuals’ fights for power and material gains, i.e. the control of illicit business operating in the border areas.\footnote{Petkovski, p. 268.} These arguments consort with observations that Macedonia and its neighbours formed the outer ring of region-wide smuggling and trafficking on a large scale, in which Macedonian minis-
tries and customs agencies set up networks and became part of the criminal structures. 44

In this context is important to note Mueller’s (2000) account of the “banality” of the ethnic wars in Yugoslavia and Rwanda. Essentially, these were not wars caused by ethnic hatred, according to Mueller, but, commonly, it was fighting carried out by rather small numbers of opportunistic and “well-armed thugs and bullies” recruited by cynical elite groups. These marauders were often street gangs or simple boys from the countryside operating under the control of the security police and local authorities. Violence and predation could make poor boys powerful and rich. In this confused situation some people joined, unwillingly or unwittingly, in the killings and lootings. Force was used against those members of the community who were opposed to the violent methods; many were intimidated, others were executed. Under these conditions, even a very small number of thugs – and they are found everywhere – can cause extensive and irreparable damage to society.45

Arms proliferation

Although information about the amount of illicit arms in Macedonia remains sketchy, it is commonly estimated that about half a million weapons looted from Albanian armouries in 1997 in addition to large quantities of arms smuggled from other countries are now circulating in the country.46 Moreover, Nato collected only about 10% of the NLAs weapons in the “Essential Harvest”-operation, which was conducted after the signing of the Ohrid Agreement in 2001. Ethnic Macedonians were not disarmed, in spite of allegations that some 10 000 weapons were handed out to individuals by political parties during the crisis.47 Calls for the surrender of these weapons will, in all likelihood, not be heeded as long as Macedonia’s volatile situation remains and public distrust of the judiciary persists.

Albanian extremists have used vast amounts of profits from heroin trafficking to equip militants in Macedonia, according to Western intelligence sources. Dealers in several Balkan countries and Switzerland have supplied shoulder-held anti-aircraft missile systems, which can be used to fight the helicopter gun ships and attack jets that the Macedonian government have bought from Ukraine. Other types of weapons obtained include 120mm and 82mm mortars, anti-tank rockets, large-calibre machine-guns, grenade launchers, assault rifles, high-calibre sniper rifles, and millions of rounds of ammunition.48

44 Hajdinjak, pp. 17-18. Hajdinjak explicates this phenomenon against the backdrop of seriously dislocated Balkan economies (due to the collapse of the COMECON, economic sanctions, and wars); in such an abnormal situation, many came to regard smuggling and its accoutrements as licit activities.

45 Mueller, p. 53-60. Mueller observes that in Yugoslavia ordinary Serb soldiers deserted en masse and many reservists did not report for duty and he maintains that a well-equipped international policing force could have stopped the bandit-led conflict in Yugoslavia (and in Rwanda). Ethnic groups did not go to war. In Mueller’s own words “ethnicity proved essentially to be simply the characteristic around which the perpetrators and the politicians who recruited and encouraged them happened to array themselves … it was important as an ordering device … not as a crucial motivating force”, and Mueller concludes that the Yugoslavia and Rwanda wars were by no means inevitable.


47 Ripley (2002 b), p. 41.According to Nato’s own figures “Essential Harvest” collected four tanks/APCs; 17 air defence weapon systems; 161 support weapon systems (mortar/anti-tank); 483 machine guns; and 3,210 assault rifles. Additionally, NATO troops had collected a total of 397,625 items of mines, explosives, and ammunition. See Keesing’s, September 2001 – Macedonia. Completion of NATO weapons collection operation – New NATO operation. http://keesings.gpii.net/keesings/ lnews.dll?templates&fn=main.htm&2.0/ (accessed on November 11, 2002).B Vankovska 2002 b, p. 11.

48 Jennings, February 16, 2002.
Unexploded Ordnance and Landmines

The bombardment by Macedonia’s security forces of occupied villages during the 2001 crisis resulted in contaminations by unexploded ordinance, particularly in the areas of Tetovo, Kumanovo and the surroundings of Skopje. As the security forces used low quality ammunition it is expected that the number of unexploded ordnance in Macedonia remains comparatively high.\(^49\) Clearance is progressing, however, and as disposal experts continue to remove mines and unexploded ordnance in the Macedonian-Kosovo border area, displaced persons keep returning to their homes.\(^50\)

Militant groups

Nato intelligence reports allege that fighters of the ex-KLA and NLA have formed a new extremist organisation, the Army of the Republic of Ilirida (ARI), which is training in the Macedonia-Kosovo border area of Kodra Fura. It is calculated that ARI has about 200 fighters who are financially supported by Albanian émigrés. According to reports in Dnevnik, Macedonia’s biggest daily, ARI’s aims are to kill moderate Albanians who supported the Ohrid Agreement and to fight a guerrilla war in Macedonia in 2003. Alternative analyses, however, portray the ARI as a group of adventurers who do not pose a real security threat as ARI represents a fragmentation – not a consolidation – of NLA. These interpretations notwithstanding, several attacks on Macedonian army posts as well as inter-Albanian shootouts have occurred during recent months.\(^51\)

In order to improve the security situation in the volatile border regions cooperation between the Macedonian defence authorities and UNMIK together with KFOR has been enhanced.\(^52\) Military officials judge that the situation is relatively stable and that media speculations about a “spring offensive” in Macedonia by Albanian extremists have little substance.\(^53\) Official Albanian and Macedonian statements deny the existence of ARI.\(^54\)

Albanian hardliners advocating the idea of a Greater Albania, i.e. the uniting of all Albanians in the Balkans in one enlarged state (implying the changing of borders), have little support in Albania and Kosovo. Other political forces in the region also reject the idea; Ali Ahmeti has stated that certain political leaders used “Greater Albania” merely as an instrument during the election campaign in 2002.\(^55\)

The “Lions”, a rapid intervention unit, which, in the face of international opposition, was set up by the previous government to fight armed

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\(^{49}\) Landmine Monitor Report 2002. http://www.icbl.org/lm/2002/macedonia.html Internally displaced persons and returnees are particularly exposed to accidents, since they do not have the same knowledge of where the mines were laid as the persons who stayed in their villages during the crisis.


\(^{51}\) Ordanoski 2002b, p. 36–37.

\(^{52}\) RFE/RL Newsline, 14 February 2003.

\(^{53}\) In a recent statement President Trajkovski expressed some confidence: “I do not believe that Macedonian citizens need fear an escalation of violence. Both the army and the Interior Ministry are in control of the situation and are prepared to take all necessary measures, together with the international community.” RFE/RL 21 February 2003, Volume 7, Number 6.

\(^{54}\) RFE/RL Newsline, 24 February 2003.

Albanian groups during the 2001 crisis. Also among ethnic Macedonians, it is widely recognized that the rapid intervention unit was responsible for much of the violence during the 2001–2002 period; the “Lions” (who carried on with their activities after the signing of the peace agreement) caused more human suffering than the ethnic strife itself, according to a report in the magazine Forum. As the unit has now been dissolved, some of its ex-members are being employed by the interior and defence ministries to get new assignments, while those who became known for their excessively violent actions during the crisis, will not be restored.56

The recruitment of ethnic Albanians into the Macedonian police force is proceeding at a good speed, and mixed police patrols have recently shown to have positive effects on inter-ethnic relations, as villagers’ trust in the police is gradually returning.57 In the Macedonian army, on the other hand, the share of ethnic Albanian officers and NCOs is only 2.5%, and the possibilities to raise this proportion significantly within the next few years remain slim.58

**Human Rights Issues**

Impunity is still an affliction in the Macedonian society. The amnesty laws enacted after the 2001 crisis prevent trials at domestic courts of those responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law. Thus, many perpetrators of war crimes enjoy impunity.59

The European Roma Rights Center (ERRC) has listed several cases of alleged human rights abuses against persons belonging to the Roma community. Allegations include police violence against individuals and anti-Roma reporting in Macedonian media.60

Yet, the number of prosecution cases against police ill-treatment remains very low, and authorities’ dismissals of clear cases of abuse raised by the Ombudsman corroborate suppositions that the government is giving impunity to law-enforcement officials.61

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In accordance with the terms of the Agreement the Macedonia’s constitution as well as its current legislation underwent extensive changes. The main provisions included:

- references in the constitution to the “Macedonian people”, “nationalities”, and “minorities” to be replaced by “majority population”, “communities”, and “communities not in the majority”, signifying Macedonia as a civic society including all its ethnic groups
- the Albanian language to be given official status in communities where ethnic Albanians comprised at least 20 per cent of the population
- state-funded university education to be provided in the Albanian language as well as higher education in the Albanian language in communities where ethnic Albanians comprised at least 20 per cent of the population
- a ‘double majority’ system to be established in the legislature requiring that half of the lawmakers voting on a measure must come from one or more minority groups for it to be enacted.
- proportional representation of ethnic Albanians in the Constitutional Court, government administration, and police to be ensured
- ethnic Albanian police commanders to be appointed in communities where ethnic Albanians form a local majority.
- authority to local governments to be enhanced
- the Orthodox, Muslim, and Catholic faiths to be given equal status
- amnesty to militants who did not commit crimes during clashes with government forces to be granted

The Agreement met with strong opposition particularly among ethnic Macedonians. Opinion polls revealed that more than 50% of the ethnic Macedonians (but less than 13% of the ethnic Albanians) opposed the Agreement. They felt betrayed by the USA and NATO, who, as they saw it, were biased in favour of the ethnic Albanians. Sharp criticism was delivered in the Sobranie by the Prime Minister, Ljubco Georgievski, who stated that the Agreement “was made under direct pressure of violence

Source: Financial Times. (Quoted in Keesing’s Record of World Events. Vol. 47, 2001.)
and terror”, and he claimed that it was “a great gift to all terrorists” … “the message was that “terrorism pays off”.

**Corruption**

When the coalition led by Ljubco Georgievski was brought to power in 1998 the Macedonian people had high hopes for economic development and rising living standards. The pledges of the new government to end corruption and improve inter-ethnic relations filled the Macedonian public with some optimism.

In contravention to the promises of the Georgievski-led government, however, corruption became more entrenched and spread to all levels of government and state institutions. In the absence of institutional transparency, corruption related to privatization increased. Leading politicians landed millions in foreign currency through the privatization or liquidating of state-owned enterprises. The banking system proved not to be immune and caused serious economic and political problems in an already weak Macedonia. The most corrupt officials, according to research findings from 2001, were customs officers, ministers, MPs, tax collectors and judges – in that order. The investigation also found that all respondents, giving their answers in the midst of the 2001 crisis, rated corruption as a greater affliction in society than ethnic unrest.

A well-placed Macedonian journalist noted, “…both VMRO-DPMNE and DPA are perceived as highly corrupt structures whose criminal interests are dominating Macedonian economic and political life”. The leaders of those parties were described by Albanian and Macedonian scholars as “among the richest in the country”. In a scathing report, the International Crisis Group (ICG) alleged that corruption in Macedonia had become endemic, thus posing a very serious threat to social stability in the country.

The European Commission, too, has voiced grave concern about the corrupt practices that persist in all the Balkan countries, some of which are thought to be among “the most corrupt in the world”. The Commission concludes that widespread corruption has weakened state administrations and judiciaries in the Balkans. Moreover, it has robbed finance ministries of revenues and discouraged foreign investors.
The “weak state”

The Balkan region has been described as a dangerous “mixture of weak states, nonstates, and present or future protectorates”, where an erosion and delegitimation process is destroying democratic regimes – although, on the surface, their institutions remain.\(^{70}\) For a better understanding of politics in this region, a clear focus on the citizens’ experiences is needed. The key questions are ‘why do they feel so insecure’ and ‘why are Balkan democracies so corrupt’?\(^ {71}\)

Characteristically, in Macedonia’s weak party system, leading politicians are not dedicated to social and economic development benefiting ordinary citizens, but politics are dominated by elites’ merciless fighting for control of the state with the objective of personal aggrandizement.\(^ {72}\) In this political environment clashes of heads have been substituted for clashes of ideas, and the buying of loyalty for appointments to high positions and well-paid jobs has become “normal political business”.

The political system is incapable of mediating, refining, and moderating conflicting group interests, due to a lacking consensus on legitimate and authoritative methods of resolving conflicts. Nor are political leaders themselves recognized as legitimate moderators of group conflict.\(^ {73}\) The purpose of ethnic Macedonians to include ethnic Albanian politicians in the government and in the top bureaucracy is to maintain order through inter-elite distribution of privileges.\(^ {74}\)

As the Macedonian political system is operating with little concern for the broader public interest, sentiments of indifference, cynicism and disgust are common among ordinary citizens.\(^ {75}\) Negative experiences from communist regimes in the past coupled with disappointment with the poor results of the first post communist decade have discouraged people’s participation in civil society organizations.\(^ {76}\) To the man in the street the concept of “authority” suggests a ruler’s “unlimited control over the subjects”. Citizens’ attitudes to authority are therefore often negative: “lack of loyalty; non-acceptance of state decisions; attempts to avoid contact with the state, and, if possible, to cheat it”.\(^ {77}\)

The media

Mainstream political analysts conclude that Macedonia’s media became part of the conflict during the 2001 crisis.\(^ {78}\) By controlling newspapers and radio and TV stations the parties to the conflict were able to influence opinions to serve their own narrow interests. They could spread disinformation to manipulate public sentiment and build animosity and fear.

\(^{70}\) Krastev, p. 39, 44.
\(^{71}\) Krastev, p. 45.
\(^{72}\) On a particularly critical note, Maleski offers a glimpse of the making of Macedonian foreign policy; all debates "were conducted in plenary sessions, dominated not by those with greatest capacities of mind but of lungs" ... and ... "enemy parties searched for problems in the solutions instead of solutions for problems". Maleski, http://www.newbalkanpolitics.org.mk/issue_3/denko.polticarot.eng.asp (accessed on November 10, 2002)
\(^{74}\) Vankovska 2002 b, p. 3.
\(^{75}\) Opinion polls confirm that public trust in state institutions is very low. Less than 7% approve of their parliamentarians, 62% think that Macedonia is not moving in the right direction. Krastev, p. 40.
\(^{76}\) Family members and close circles of friends remain the most important networks to the citizens of post-communist states. Howard, p. 162.
\(^{77}\) Trajkovski, p. 13.
\(^{78}\) In a critical comment, Denko Maleski says that Macedonia’s journalists and intellectuals have become "champions of their own truth", thus adding fuel to existing inter-ethnic tensions in Macedonia. Maleski, http://www.newbalkanpolitics.org.mk/issue_3/denko.polticarot.eng.asp (accessed on November 10, 2002)
The view of the International Press Institute is that reporters of the two different language media were taking sides, reporting in accordance to ethnic belonging. Media displayed serious lacks of professionalism and responsibility, and even the most basic principles of journalism were often ignored. In the words of the Bosnian commentator Zlatko Dizdarevic “Macedonian journalists seem to have lost all sense of responsibility, actively stoking a drama which could have a very bloody finale.”

Gordana Icevska and Ilir Ajdini conclude that reporters yielded to emotions and constructed arguments to depict a situation that would suit their own group or an international public. This unbalanced and selective reporting added fuel to the violent conflict.

In Macedonian language media the ethnic Albanians were frequently called terrorist gangs infiltrating from Kosovo or Albania; they were supported by the Mujahedins (or, after September 11, al-Qaeda) and they were using torture and terror; the terrorists’ aim was the conquering of the western part of the country and cleanse it of non-Albanian peoples; etc.

The same groups were described in the Albanian language media as local Albanian fighters waging a just war against Macedonian paramilitary groups who were supported by Serbian, Russian and Ukrainian mercenaries; the Albanian fighters’ aim was to win the rights of the Albanian people.

The split of Macedonia’s media thus entailed drastically different accounts of the political developments. Moreover, some reporters gave up their role as non-participant observers. As an illustration of the very bad atmosphere that pervaded Macedonian media during the crisis, Icevska and Ajdini mention the abhorrent case of reporter Magdalena Cizmanova of Kanal 5, who, “… while reporting from a Macedonian army position in one of the crisis regions … fired a grenade launcher at a village.”

The events of 2001 confirmed that, in times of crisis, particularly, media are very powerful, and many journalists too readily assume an interactive role and become part of a spiral of violence. Referring to the inter-ethnic violence in Macedonia in 2001, OSCE spokesperson Florin Pasnicu claims that “… reports in the media generated new developments, because they shaped the collective mentality and psychology to such a degree that people based their actions on what they read in the media …”. In addition, reporters were exposed to the anger and the threats of their audiences if the accounts did not strictly follow the ethnic line. Frequently there were hostile situations, and even open violence (mainly by ethnic Macedonians) was inflicted on both Macedonian and Albanian journalist.

Still, there was reporting, e.g. in the private Al TV-channel, which gave accounts of the opinions of the “other side”. The editor-in-chief of the A1, Aco Kabranov, has expressed the optimistic view that the citizens of Macedonia will learn to distinguish between the “patriotic” reports and the unbiased.

The authorities’ withdrawal of a draft law that would seriously restrict freedom of expression has also been noted as positive development. Through the withdrawal the government is refraining from indirectly “appointing” journalists; nor can the misuse of press freedom be punishable under criminal law.

There is a general awareness growing in Macedonia that reliable and diverse media are crucial for the development of the society. A number of responsible journalists function as watchdogs over the political elite to help holding them accountable. Other independent media monitor human rights in Macedonia. Recognizing the hardening of ethnic attitudes in society after the 2001 crisis, journalists are likely to assume greater responsibility, and there are hopes that they will facilitate dialogues between groups and support reconciliation projects.
The disintegration of Yugoslavia, the wars in Croatia and Bosnia Herzegovina, and the Greek trade embargo had severe impacts on independent Macedonia’s economy during 1990s. Deficient macroeconomic policies aggravated the situation, and the GDP as well as investments and savings fell sharply for several years (see table 1.) The economic performance, which had started to improve in the year of 2000, deteriorated in 2001, as a result of the security crisis. With the eruption of violence military expenditure increased sharply. Simultaneously revenue decreased, as collection of VAT fell far below the expected amount. The transferring of money out of the country rose, and the amount of remittances from Macedonians working abroad went down. Unemployment soared to approximately 50% causing a sharp increase in the number of poor people and a widening of the social gap.81

It is estimated that 380 000 persons are now on social allowances of a mere MKD 3 600 (about € 60) per month; about 20% of the population go hungry.82

Table 1 – Macedonia – some key economic indicators 1991 – 2001 (in US$)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1991</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2001</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GDP (US$ billions)</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross domestic investment/GDP</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exports of goods and services (US$ billions)</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exports of goods and services/GDP</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>48.3</td>
<td>40.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imports of goods and services</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross domestic savings/GDP</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross national savings/GDP</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current account balance</td>
<td>-5.5</td>
<td>-3.0</td>
<td>-10.3</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Rural poverty

Approximately 40% of Macedonia’s population live in rural parts, which make up about 87% of the country’s total area. As the state has become increasingly absent in these parts during the last decade, many villages have fallen into decay. The consequences of this neglect are particularly severe for the vulnerable groups living in the hill and mountain areas. As much as 43% of households in these areas state that they do not have enough money for food. In isolated areas particularly, there is an extremely low availability of health centres, schools, and cultural facilities. Thus, standards of education are low. Although official figures indicate that 95% of the Macedonians are literate, less than 25% of the poor have gained education higher than primary school level. Many have no schooling at all or only incomplete elementary education; there is an over-representation of women in this group: 73% of the illiterates or those without schooling are women.

Inadequate development policies pertaining to sewage systems, clean drinking water, roads and transportation networks together with agricultural production problems of increasing input costs and market uncertainties have resulted in widespread stagnation and caused many young people to abandon farming and move to urban areas. In some places uncontrolled out-migration has completely emptied villages in a very short time. Already in 1994 it was reported that as many as 121 villages had no longer any inhabitants, and in as many as 21% of the total number of Macedonia’s villages there were less than 50 inhabitants. In 104 villages there were only 10 people or less.

Moreover, the number of civil associations and organizations in rural areas are decreasing. A diminishing social capital deprives rural populations of their possibilities to cope with a deteriorating situation, and forces many to move to the cities. Young women in some rural parts are escaping from village life by means of marrying men from the cities; a negative impact on the rural gender balance is already being felt.

The typical problems of Macedonia’s transition economy are also exacerbating inter-ethnic tensions in the rural areas. The vast changes in the sector of state companies have made many workers redundant, and ethnic Macedonians who for many years have been enjoying state employment advantages are now facing dramatic drops in living standards. In contrast, ethnic Albanians who seldom were given the chance to build up trust in the state now seem better prepared for a shrinking economy, as they continue to earn a living through small-scale trade, labour migration, etc. Also, remittances from relatives abroad greatly improve the household economy of the ethnic Albanians.

This reversal of the inter-ethnic situation in rural areas is inducing mutual resentment and group stereotyping. Ethnic Macedonians find it difficult to accept the fact that their living standard has fallen below that of less educated ethnic Albanians. In the perceptions of ethnic Macedonians the source of the ethnic Albanians’ possessions are mainly criminal

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84 55.6% of the total number of civil associations and organisations registered in 1954 were active in the rural areas. By 1999 their share had dropped to 5.9%. Trajkovski, p. 21.
85 Trajkovski, pp. 51-52.
activities. Ethnic Albanians, on the other hand, tend to perceive less fortunate ethnic Macedonians as lazy.

Whereas ethnic Macedonians commonly live in urban areas, ethnic Albanians predominantly live in densely populated villages with large shares of young people. The rural ethnic Albanian population is concentrated in the northwest of the country, where unemployment among the young generation is particularly high. As the 2001 crisis stymied small business operations unemployment has risen further, and an increasing number of people are now earning their livelihood in the informal sector of the economy, of which the authorities of the state have only little knowledge – and less control.86

The large numbers of unemployed youth in border villages where small arms are easily available pose a severe threat to the security in an already turbulent environment, where illicit trade in tobacco, alcohol, drugs, women, and weapons is increasing. As the state is not very relevant to the citizens in these areas, parallel power structures based on criminality develop, and poor, young men without means of livelihood tend to be recruited by these destructive forces.

**Economic Outlook**

The slow recovery in Macedonia’s major export markets, Germany and Serbia (together accounting for approx. 40% of Macedonia’s exports) has had serious effects on the economy; it is estimated that industrial production and construction work shrunk by approximately 8.5% in 2002. However, it is forecast that exports and investments will increase and result in a 2% industrial growth in 2003. Thus, real GDP growth for 2003 is estimated at 3%, and for 2004 at 4%. Improvements in fiscal and monetary policies are expected to bring down inflation to approximately 2.5% in 2003, and an increase in export earnings should shrink the current-account deficit to 10.5% of GDP in 2003 and 9.8% of GDP in 2004.87

About 95% of the state-owned companies originally listed in the privatisation program have been sold. In order to secure additional loans from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, another 80 non-strategic companies have to be privatised. However, the new government has indicated that this will be delayed.88 Thus, the government’s budgetary problems remain. The deficit in 2002 is estimated at 4.4% of GDP.89

To a very high degree, thus, Macedonia continuously relies on foreign aid to manage its budget. The government is optimistic about meeting conditions to receive US$45 million from the EU; expenditures will be curtailed and revenues will be increased through endeavours to stop mismanagement. During 2003 international credits and grants are expected to total US$115 million.90

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86 In the early 1990s James Pettifer pointed to the “consistent and unresolved problem … that a predominantly urban political elite of Macedonians is ruling over a country where they have almost no presence at all in very large rural areas … and that … the non-Macedonian minority is, or has been, wooed by the neighbouring nation-state”. Pettifer, p. 477.

87 EIU ViewsWire Number 301, 22 January 2003. The Economist Intelligence Unit Ltd.

88 EIU ViewsWire 27 December, 2002. The Economist Intelligence Unit Ltd.


According to preliminary results of the population census carried out during the first half of November 2002, Macedonia’s population totals 2 038 059 (including 23 714 foreigners, i.e. mainly refugees who have lived in Macedonia for less than one year). This figure represents a 6.3% increase compared to the previous census held in 1994.91

Some of most salient changes in the complex multi-ethnic structure of Macedonia during the past decades relate to the ethnic Albanians and the Turks. The Albanian share of the total population rose from 12.5% in 1953 to 22.9% in 1994. During the same period the Turks’ share declined from 15.6% to 4%, see Table 2.92 Also, the young cohorts of the ethnic Albanian population are comparatively much larger than those of the ethnic Macedonian population. An Albanian family in Macedonia has an average of 4.2 members and the growth rate of ethnic Albanians is estimated at 20 per 1000, which compares to 3 per 1000 for ethnic Macedonians.93

Table 2. Population structure (in %) according to declared ethnic affiliation, censuses 1953–1994

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Macedonian</td>
<td>66.0</td>
<td>71.2</td>
<td>69.3</td>
<td>67.0</td>
<td>65.3</td>
<td>66.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albanian</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>22.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turks</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roma</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serb</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vlach</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total population mn.</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: State Statistical Office Yearbook 1997

92 For example, large numbers of Turks declared themselves to be Albanians in the 1948 census, as they had become suspected of espionage following the friendly relations between Turkey and the West after the World War II. Similarly, many ethnic Albanians declared themselves to be Turks in the 1953 census due to increased exposure after Yugoslavia’s break with the Cominform. Poulton, p. 28. The Turks of Macedonia are now concentrated to Gostivar and Skopje. Accessing numbers of Macedonia’s minority groups has, historically, been complicated as members of the different groups have “changed” their identity with variations in the political climate in the country. The sudden decline in the share of Turks after 1953 is explained by extensive emigration to Turkey.
Ethnic Division

Ethnic Macedonians and ethnic Albanians (together comprising approximately 90% of the country’s total population) are two distinctly different societies with different languages, religions and cultures. While ethnic Macedonians do not speak Albanian, many ethnic Albanians know Macedonian. The groups have their own language media, and, in practice, their own political parties. About 95% of the ethnic Macedonians are Christian Orthodox, while about 98% of the ethnic Albanians are Muslims.

Although ethnic Macedonians and ethnic Albanians have lived together in relative peace and contentment for years there is little cross-cultural understanding: inter-ethnic marriages are rare, and, in daily life, there is hardly any interaction between the two groups. Shops, cafes, restaurants, discos, etc. are mostly segregated.

Prejudice

The multi-ethnic character of the Macedonian state also involves status differences and mutual distrust among the communities. In all groups perceptions of discriminatory treatment are common, although these feelings are considerably stronger among the Roma and ethnic Albanians.94 Feelings of insecurity among the ethnic Macedonians concern the high birth rate of the ethnic Albanians, which, in the longer perspective, will drastically change the ethnic map of Macedonia.95

In the 1980s relatively few people in Macedonia thought ethnicity was an important issue. Shortly after Macedonia had gained independence, however, attitudes changed, and the ethnic and religious belonging of friends and neighbours became salient in day-to-day interaction – a development which was encouraged by politicians. Research carried out in 1993 concluded that Macedonians' prejudices against Albanians and Roma had become obvious, as had Albanians' prejudices against Macedonians and Serbs, although expressions of extremism and aggressiveness were still rather uncommon.

Comparing results from research carried out in 1987–1988 Simoska found that in 1996 twice as many respondents (representing all ethnic groups) thought that “one should be loyal only to one’s own people”, and that “one should always give an advantage to one’s own people”.

Data on common stereotypes and prejudices from Simoska’s investigation in 1996 show that the Macedonians look upon themselves as hard-working, peaceful, and honest, whereas they think that the Albanians are primitive and backward. The Albanians, on the other hand, commonly see themselves as diligent, honest, and educated, and the Macedonians as dishonest but hard-working. The Turks, too, consider the Macedonians as hard-working, but also peaceful, and cultured, and they have the same opinion of themselves. The Albanians, however, are a militant nation, according to the Turks. Prejudices harboured by all these groups seem to converge when other groups are evaluated: Serbs are aggressive and militant, Roma are poor and lazy, and Vlachs are stingy and clever.96

94 Todorovski, p. 89.
95 Todorovski, p. 92
96 Simoska, 1997.
During a stay in Tetovo (1999/2000) Seymour observed that their ethnic belonging was the first thing that individuals would mention when introducing themselves to her. Recording group perceptions Seymour found that the ethnic Albanians (the majority group in the Tetovo area) felt they were excluded and maltreated. They looked upon themselves as hard-working tax-payers. Yet, they thought, the taxes they paid – as well as international donations – benefited mainly citizens living in Macedonian-majority parts of the country. Their preconceptions blinded them to the fact that ethnic Macedonians, too, were suffering from corruption and the insecurity caused by the various transition policies.97

By 1996 it had become clear that the attitudes of the young people in Macedonia had hardened considerably as a result of increased politicisation of life and the noxious stereotyping in media and informal networks. This trend is continuing, and human rights activists now express grave concern about increasing jingoism and ethnic bashing among students at high schools and universities in Macedonia.98

The Roma

The vast majority of the Roma are Muslims and speak primarily the Ašlja dialect of Romani. Many also use Macedonian, Albanian or Turkish as a second language.

As the Macedonian Roma are represented in political parties and in the Sobranie their minority rights are generally considered to be much broader than those of their kin in other Balkan states. Also, state radio and TV channels broadcast in Roma, and there are newspapers and magazines published in the Roma language in Macedonia. Roma school children have right to education in their own language.

While, the Roma are considered to be “loyal” to the state their relations with ethnic Macedonians (as well as with Turks) seem to be good. However, their relations with the ethnic Albanians are strained, since Albanians leaders – normally not known as champions of the Roma – are commonly putting pressure on the Roma to declare themselves as Albanian. (According to ethnic Macedonians, the ill-concealed objective of such persuasion is a strategic increase of the ethnic Albanians’ population share in Macedonia.)99

Despite their constitutional rights, the Roma is the most vulnerable community in Macedonia. A large number of Roma (as well as ethnic Albanians and Turks) who before independence had moved to Macedonia from another republic of former Yugoslavia and who had then neglected to register officially as citizens of Socialist Republic of Macedonia have become stateless persons without rights to vote or to receive social welfare and medical service.100 Other types of discrimination against

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97 Seymour, p.1. About 75% of the Tetovo population is ethnic Albanian, about 20% is ethnic Macedonian, and the remainder is comprised of Turks, Roma, and Serbs.
98 Personal communication with high-ranking human rights activist in Macedonia.
99 Nevertheless, in order to improve their status in areas where they are treated as pariah, Roma have “converted” and declared themselves as Albanians, Turks, or Macedonians.
100 “Despite government promises to reform Macedonia’s overly exclusive 1992 citizenship law in line with Council of Europe standards, the law remained unchanged. Drafted at the time of its independence from the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Macedonia’s citizenship law never adequately resolved the status of the significant number of Yugoslav citizens who were long-term residents in Macedonia but who were neither born in Macedonia nor ethnic Macedonian. Large numbers of ethnic Albanians, Turks, and Roma who knew no other home than Macedonia remained effectively stateless as a result of the law.” Human Rights Watch, Macedonia 2001.
Roma are being reported; police violence against Roma has been registered; allegedly Roma people have difficulties in obtaining business licenses; municipal facilities are not provided in all Roma communities; etc.

As a consequence of the state’s half-hearted efforts to integrate the Roma, poor education has become one of the biggest problems for the community, as this excludes many from employment. About 24% of the Roma population over the age of 15 are illiterate, and 30% of them have not finished elementary education. As a consequence of the state’s half-hearted efforts to integrate the Roma, poor education has become one of the biggest problems for the community, as this excludes many from employment. About 24% of the Roma population over the age of 15 are illiterate, and 30% of them have not finished elementary education. A UNICEF study on Roma women and children states that 97.7% have no regular jobs.

Urban Roma commonly live in ghetto-like settlements, where houses lack kitchen facilities and indoor toilets. For example: Topaana, which is situated a few kilometres from Skopje city centre, is the home of some 5,000 Roma, most of whom are unemployed and on meagre social benefits. Yet Topaana is not officially recognised as a settlement, since, without permission, the inhabitants have built their houses on public lands, where even the basic facilities are lacking.

Religious groups

In the Macedonian society there is primacy of ethnic attitudes over religious sentiments; hence, groups generally state their demands and ambitions in secular wordings. There is little cohesion within the Muslim population of Macedonia. The majority are Sunni, but there are also Sunni Sufi orders and Bektashi Sufi. While the Albanian Muslims belong to the organization Islamic Community, Turks, Tobeshi (i.e. Muslim Slavs), Bosnians, and some Roma mainly belong to the Muslim Religion Community. This divide entails an unequal distribution of power among the different groups in favour of the ethnic Albanians, which has given rise to major differences and feelings of distinctiveness among the Muslim groups of Macedonia.

Nevertheless, the “Muslim Conspiracy” mythology, as well as tendencies of identification of Islam with the political ambitions of the ethnic Albanians, has created social distance and mutual distrust between Muslims and Orthodox Christians in Macedonia, and, occasionally, this has led to hostilities between the groups. The lack of unity within the Orthodox Christian community is mainly due to the widely differing political outlooks among ethnic Macedonians, Serbs, and Vlachs.

The Catholics in Macedonia, presently facing no serious problems, comprise a very small and heterogeneous group dispersed throughout the country. Most of them are ethnic Macedonians belonging to the Eastern Rites. The Roman Catholics are mainly ethnic Croats.

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101 Todorovski, p. 94.
102 Trajkovski, p. 55.
105 A few Albanian Orthodox groups live in the Lake Ohrid area and some Albanian Roman Catholics live in Skopje. The Muslim Slavs live mainly in the Debar and Struga regions. Gaber, pp. 103-104.
106 According to the census of 1994 only about 7,800 persons are registered as Catholics in Macedonia. However, their religious leaders state that the correct figure is about 12,800. Minorities in Southeastern Europe: Catholics in Macedonia 2000, p. 1. http://216.239.57.100/search?q=cache:GYmzPrjVLpkC:www.greethelsinki.gr/pdf/cedime-se-macedonia-catholics.doc+szajkowski+macedonia&hl=en&ie=UTF-8 (accessed on November 25, 2002)
Scenario One

Recognizing that a continued external support is decisive for the strengthening of security and the fostering of social development in Macedonia, the international community maintains its presence in the country. While the US continues to scale down its Balkan involvement, rifts within the EU are slowly being healed, and consensus on its Macedonia policies is maintained.

High-ranking international officials continue to take a hand in most crucial talks in Macedonia. Strategies aiming at encouraging reformists and immobilizing actors who are intent upon derailing the peace process are being pursued. However, frequently conflict entrepreneurs appealing to ethnic patronage and pledging speedy solutions to groups’ long-term problems foment dissatisfaction and provoke aggression. In addition, shady groups using methods of violence spread fear, mainly in Skopje and in the western part of the country. As the authorities’ capacity to deal with intra-Albanian violence in racketeering organizations do not improve, ethnic Macedonian families, fearing for their security, move out of Albanian-dominated city areas.

Using its tested instrument of prospective membership, the EU is changing the playing-field for the Macedonian politicians, and the system of incentives and disincentives is being further elaborated. International support for concerted regional efforts to curb crime in the Balkan region is being strengthened and yields some good results. Co-operating with Kfor, Macedonia’s defence authorities improve their capacity to interdict the flow of arms and other illicit goods across the borders.

In the Balkan society at large conflagrations have been put out and are gradually being replaced by “controlled instability”. Macedonia’s neighbours continue to make steady progress on the political and economic fronts, which furthers co-operation between them and encourages joint efforts to solve common problems.

As the anti-corruption program is beginning to show some positive effects, the government is gaining the public’s confidence upon which it can build political will. The WTO membership makes Macedonia more transparent. Transparency, working in tandem with increasing accountability, attracts foreign capital, which is channelled into employment-generating projects. As the process of integration of the Balkan states into the Euro-Atlantic structures picks up momentum bigger streams of aid reach these countries, which increases Greece’s business opportunities,
and, hence, its long-term commitment to stability in the region. Macedonia’s economy grows, although the pace is slower than forecast because of the slump in Germany and other important markets for Macedonia. The growth generates new employment. Yet, this is too limited in scale to have any decisive impact on social inequalities and inter-ethnic friction, in the short run.

Ethnic identities, hardened by the violence in 2001, continuously pose a threat to Macedonia’s development. Divisions remain and, occasionally, entail delays in the process of implementation of the Ohrid Agreement.

Albanians groups who advocate an expansion of Albanian territory in the region are losing support, whereas the majority of the Albanians who want to live in Macedonia (where conditions are better than in Albania and Kosovo) assertively, yet non-violently, continue to strive for improved group status.

Local incidents of violence and tit-for-tat attacks occur, although large-scale fighting does not erupt among Macedonia’s strife-weary communities.
Scenario Two

Under the aegis of the international community, structural reform is underway in Macedonia. With the reforming of the judiciary prosecutions are becoming independent. However, this entails further disclosures in the media of the previous government’s corruptness and its irresponsible behaviour during the 2001 crisis. Open exchanges of serious accusations within the Macedonian elite worsen political conditions and threaten stability in the country at large. Intensified politicking and caving among the weakened Albanian elite become violent and give cause for worry also to Macedonia’s neighbours. Leaders find pretexts to renege on their commitment to the Ohrid Agreement, and its implementation stalls. Too weak to resist political and economic coercion, Macedonian journalists relapse into propagandistic reporting.

Macedonia continuously attracts foreign capital, mainly from Greek business investments and international aid organizations. The economy grows slowly, although in the hardened political circumstances the government faces difficulties in utilizing growth efficiently. There are few signs of improvements in rural infrastructure, and the work on establishing local self-governments is being protracted. Unemployment remains high and, in isolated villages families live in abject circumstances. In urban areas living conditions are improving somewhat, although political distrust is creating social tensions. Increasingly, the unemployed youth in the cities are despairing of political solutions to their problems and seek better living conditions in Northern Europe.

For Macedonia, the implications of the Kosovo impasse are continued uncertainty and apprehensions of outbreaks of violence in the western region, as Albanians are growing restive and distrust is spreading. However, improved national and international vigilance and resolute intervention prevents the re-emergence of large-scale fighting.
US-EU disagreements over the global fight against terrorism have negative effects on EU consensus-building on Balkan policies. Flagging international attention to Macedonia emboldens actors who are thriving in anarchic environments. Concurrently, political leaders dedicated to socio-economic development are yielding ground. The reduction of international support halts regional efforts to curb illicit trade. Criminals and shady groups thrive in an increasingly anarchic environment in the north-western region of the state and are able to expand their noxious activities.

The government is fulfilling its promises of a “clean hands” policy, although the results are meagre, as those with a vested interest in its failure are gaining strength. This has negative repercussions on the work on structural change in state institutions, generally, and the reformists in the government cannot hold their ground.

Foreign investments are dwindling and disbursements of pledged donations from international aid agencies are being withheld, which increases the deficit in the state budget. Deferred payments to state employees and shrinking social benefits cause turmoil of passions. Several large-scale strikes take place in urban Macedonia. A number of challenges emerge and threaten stability in the country. Politicians who were sidelined following the elections of 2002 pander to popular disaffection in troubled areas and manage to mobilize unemployed youth to incite communal violence. However, wielding his power of influence, Ahmeti manages to allay ensuing frictions in trouble-spots. Ahmeti’s growing popularity is undermining the political positions of Albanian extremists. In their efforts to deprive Ahmeti of his legitimacy, his opponents finger him as a “traitor”. Consequently, the relentless Albanian infighting is being stepped up, which, in the end, mainly damages the Albanian cause. At schools and universities, confrontations between youth from the Albanian and Macedonian communities increase in number and intensity. At times, clashes result in serious injury and death. As the ethnically mixed law-enforcing bodies prove unable to stop the violence, the situation is allowed to deteriorate further; in the face of protests from national and international voluntary organizations.

As the elites of two main ethnic groups in the country cannot reconcile themselves to the thought that they must walk the road together, Macedonia remains an unconsolidated state in a historically volatile region – and the risk of fresh, large-scale violence exists.
During October and November 2002 a number of discussions were held with experts on Macedonia from the following institutes and organizations:

Centre for Multiethnic Research, Uppsala University
Uppsala
European Union Monitoring Mission
Skopje
Faculty of Law, Skopje University
Skopje
Forum (bi-weekly magazine in Macedonian language)
Skopje
Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in the Republic of Macedonia
Skopje
International Committee of the Red Cross
Skopje
International Crisis Group
Skopje
Institute for War and Peace Reporting
Kvinna till Kvinna
Stockholm
Lobi (weekly magazine in Albanian language)
Skopje
National Democratic Institute for International Affairs
Skopje
Office of the Special Representative of the European Union
Skopje
OSCE
Skopje
Sida
Skopje
Sobranie
Skopje
Annex B

Results of elections to the Macedonian Sobranie on September 15, 2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>% of vote</th>
<th>No. of seats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Together for Macedonia ¹)</td>
<td>40.46</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VMRO-DPMNE/LPM ²)</td>
<td>24.41</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Union for Integration (BDI)</td>
<td>11.85</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Party of Albanians (DPA)</td>
<td>5.21</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Prosperity Party (PDP)</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Democratic Party</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialist Party of Macedonia</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>11.48</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹) I.e. Social Democratic Alliance of Macedonia; Liberal Democratic Party; Democratic League of Bosniaks; United Party of Romas in Macedonia; Democratic Party of Serbs; Democratic Party of Turks; Democratic Union of Vlachs; Labour-Agricultural Party; Socialist-Christian Party of Macedonia; and the Green Party of Macedonia.

²) Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation-Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity/Liberal Party of Macedonia.

Source: Keesings’ Record of World Events
Annex C

The Government of Macedonia

Prime Minister – Branko Crvenkovski.
Ministers without portfolio and Deputy Prime Ministers
Radmila Shekerinska, Musa Xhaferi, and Vlado Popovski
Minister of Interior Affairs – Hari Kostov
Deputy Minister of Interior Affairs – Fatmir Dehari
Minister of Defence – Vlado Buckovski
Deputy Minister of Defence – Rizvan Sulejmani
Minister of Foreign Affairs – Ilinka Mitreva
Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs – Huad Hasanovic
Minister of Finance – Petar Goshev
Deputy Minister of Finance – Dimko Kokarovsky
Minister of Justice – Ismail Drdista
Deputy Minister of Justice – Meri Mladenovska-Gjorgjevska
Minister of Economy – Ilija Filipovski
Deputy Minister of Economy – Xheladin Satku
Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Supply – Slavko Petrov
Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Supply – Besir Jashari
Minister of Health – Rexhep Selmanî
Deputy Minister of Health – Nikola Panovski
Minister of Education – Aziz Polozhani
Deputy Minister of Education and Science – Tale Geramitcioski
Minister of Labor and Social Welfare – Jovan Manasievsiki
Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Welfare – Maksud Ali
Minister of Local Self-Government – Aleksandar Gestakovski
Deputy Minister of Local Self-Government – Tanja Altandzieva
Minister of Culture – Blagoja Stefanovski
Deputy Minister of Culture – Melpomeni Korneti
Minister of Transport and Communications – Milaim Ajdini
Deputy Minister of Transport and Communications – Dejan Kosutic
Minister of Environment and Urban Planning – Ljubomir Janev
Deputy Minister of Environment and Urban Planning – Dragoljub Matovski
FRAMING AGREEMENT

13.08.2001

The following points comprise an agreed framework for securing the future of Macedonia’s democracy and permitting the development of closer and more integrated relations between the Republic of Macedonia and the Euro-Atlantic community. This Framework will promote the peaceful and harmonious development of civil society while respecting the ethnic identity and the interests of all Macedonian citizens.

1. Basic Principles

1.1. The use of violence in pursuit of political aims is rejected completely and unconditionally. Only peaceful political solutions can assure a stable and democratic future for Macedonia.

1.2. Macedonia’s sovereignty and territorial integrity, and the unitary character of the State are inviolable and must be preserved. There are no territorial solutions to ethnic issues.

1.3. The multi-ethnic character of Macedonia’s society must be preserved and reflected in public life.

1.4. A modern democratic state in its natural course of development and maturation must continually ensure that its Constitution fully meets the needs of all its citizens and comports with the highest international standards, which themselves continue to evolve.

1.5. The development of local self-government is essential for encouraging the participation of citizens in democratic life, and for promoting respect for the identity of communities.

2. Cessation of Hostilities

2.1. The parties underline the importance of the commitments of July 5, 2001. There shall be a complete cessation of hostilities, complete voluntary disarmament of the ethnic Albanian armed groups and their complete voluntary disbandment. They acknowledge that a decision by NATO to assist in this context will require the establishment of a general, unconditional and open-ended cease-fire, agreement on a political solution to the problems of this country, a clear commitment by the armed
groups to voluntarily disarm, and acceptance by all the parties of the conditions and limitations under which the NATO forces will operate.

3. Development of Decentralized Government

3.1. A revised Law on Local Self-Government will be adopted that reinforces the powers of elected local officials and enlarges substantially their competencies in conformity with the Constitution (as amended in accordance with Annex A) and the European Charter on Local Self-Government, and reflecting the principle of subsidiarity in effect in the European Union. Enhanced competencies will relate principally to the areas of public services, urban and rural planning, environmental protection, local economic development, culture, local finances, education, social welfare, and health care. A law on financing of local self-government will be adopted to ensure an adequate system of financing to enable local governments to fulfill all of their responsibilities.

3.2. Boundaries of municipalities will be revised within one year of the completion of a new census, which will be conducted under international supervision by the end of 2001. The revision of the municipal boundaries will be effectuated by the local and national authorities with international participation.

3.3. In order to ensure that police are aware of and responsive to the needs and interests of the local population, local heads of police will be selected by municipal councils from lists of candidates proposed by the Ministry of Interior, and will communicate regularly with the councils. The Ministry of Interior will retain the authority to remove local heads of police in accordance with the law.

4. Non-Discrimination and Equitable Representation

4.1. The principle of non-discrimination and equal treatment of all under the law will be respected completely. This principle will be applied in particular with respect to employment in public administration and public enterprises, and access to public financing for business development.

4.2. Laws regulating employment in public administration will include measures to assure equitable representation of communities in all central and local public bodies and at all levels of employment within such bodies, while respecting the rules concerning competence and integrity that govern public administration. The authorities will take action to correct present imbalances in the composition of the public administration, in particular through the recruitment of members of under-represented communities. Particular attention will be given to ensuring as rapidly as possible that the police services will generally reflect the composition and distribution of the population of Macedonia, as specified in Annex C.

4.3. For the Constitutional Court, one-third of the judges will be chosen by the Assembly by a majority of the total number of Representatives that includes a majority of the total number of Representatives claiming to belong to the communities not in the majority in the population of Macedonia. This procedure also will apply to the election of the Ombudsman (Public Attorney) and the election of three of the members of the Judicial Council.
5. Special Parliamentary Procedures

5.1. On the central level, certain Constitutional amendments in accordance with Annex A and the Law on Local Self-Government cannot be approved without a qualified majority of two-thirds of votes, within which there must be a majority of the votes of Representatives claiming to belong to the communities not in the majority in the population of Macedonia.

5.2. Laws that directly affect culture, use of language, education, personal documentation, and use of symbols, as well as laws on local finances, local elections, the city of Skopje, and boundaries of municipalities must receive a majority of votes, within which there must be a majority of the votes of the Representatives claiming to belong to the communities not in the majority in the population of Macedonia.

6. Education and Use of Languages

6.1. With respect to primary and secondary education, instruction will be provided in the students’ native languages, while at the same time uniform standards for academic programs will be applied throughout Macedonia.

6.2. State funding will be provided for university level education in languages spoken by at least 20 percent of the population of Macedonia, on the basis of specific agreements.

6.3. The principle of positive discrimination will be applied in the enrolment in State universities of candidates belonging to communities not in the majority in the population of Macedonia until the enrolment reflects equitably the composition of the population of Macedonia.

6.4. The official language throughout Macedonia and in the international relations of Macedonia is the Macedonian language.

6.5. Any other language spoken by at least 20 percent of the population is also an official language, as set forth herein. In the organs of the Republic of Macedonia, any official language other than Macedonian may be used in accordance with the law, as further elaborated in Annex B. Any person living in a unit of local self-government in which at least 20 percent of the population speaks an official language other than Macedonian may use any official language to communicate with the regional office of the central government with responsibility for that municipality; such an office will reply in that language in addition to Macedonian. Any person may use any official language to communicate with a main office of the central government, which will reply in that language in addition to Macedonian.

6.6. With respect to local self-government, in municipalities where a community comprises at least 20 percent of the population of the municipality, the language of that community will be used as an official language in addition to Macedonian. With respect to languages spoken by less than 20 percent of the population of the municipality, the local authorities will decide democratically on their use in public bodies.

6.7. In criminal and civil judicial proceedings at any level, an accused person or any party will have the right to translation at State expense of
all proceedings as well as documents in accordance with relevant Council of Europe documents.

6.8. Any official personal documents of citizens speaking an official language other than Macedonian will also be issued in that language, in addition to the Macedonian language, in accordance with the law.

7. Expression of Identity

7.1. With respect to emblems, next to the emblem of the Republic of Macedonia, local authorities will be free to place on front of local public buildings emblems marking the identity of the community in the majority in the municipality, respecting international rules and usages.

8. Implementation

8.1. The Constitutional amendments attached at Annex A will be presented to the Assembly immediately. The parties will take all measures to assure adoption of these amendments within 45 days of signature of this Framework Agreement.

8.2. The legislative modifications identified in Annex B will be adopted in accordance with the timetables specified therein.

8.3. The parties invite the international community to convene at the earliest possible time a meeting of international donors that would address in particular macro-financial assistance; support for the financing of measures to be undertaken for the purpose of implementing this Framework Agreement, including measures to strengthen local self-government; and rehabilitation and reconstruction in areas affected by the fighting.

9. Annexes

The following Annexes constitute integral parts of this Framework Agreement:

A. Constitutional Amendments

B. Legislative Modifications

C. Implementation and Confidence-Building Measures


10.1. This Agreement takes effect upon signature.

10.2. The English language version of this Agreement is the only authentic version.

10.3. This Agreement was concluded under the auspices of President Boris Trajkovski.

Done at Skopje, Macedonia on 13 August 2001, in the English language.
ANNEX A

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Preamble

The citizens of the Republic of Macedonia, taking over responsibility for the present and future of their fatherland, aware and grateful to their predecessors for their sacrifice and dedication in their endeavors and struggle to create an independent and sovereign state of Macedonia, and responsible to future generations to preserve and develop everything that is valuable from the rich cultural inheritance and coexistence within Macedonia, equal in rights and obligations towards the common good — the Republic of Macedonia, in accordance with the tradition of the Krusevo Republic and the decisions of the Antifascist People’s Liberation Assembly of Macedonia, and the Referendum of September 8, 1991, they have decided to establish the Republic of Macedonia as an independent, sovereign state, with the intention of establishing and consolidating rule of law, guaranteeing human rights and civil liberties, providing peace and coexistence, social justice, economic well-being and prosperity in the life of the individual and the community, and in this regard through their representatives in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, elected in free and democratic elections, they adopt …

Article 7

(1) The Macedonian language, written using its Cyrillic alphabet, is the official language throughout the Republic of Macedonia and in the international relations of the Republic of Macedonia.

(2) Any other language spoken by at least 20 percent of the population is also an official language, written using its alphabet, as specified below.

(3) Any official personal documents of citizens speaking an official language other than Macedonian shall also be issued in that language, in addition to the Macedonian language, in accordance with the law.

(4) Any person living in a unit of local self-government in which at least 20 percent of the population speaks an official language other than Macedonian may use any official language to communicate with the regional office of the central government with responsibility for that municipality; such an office shall reply in that language in addition to Macedonian. Any person may use any official language to communicate with a main office of the central government, which shall reply in that language in addition to Macedonian.

(5) In the organs of the Republic of Macedonia, any official language other than Macedonian may be used in accordance with the law.

(6) In the units of local self-government where at least 20 percent of the population speaks a particular language, that language and its alphabet shall be used as an official language in addition to the Macedonian language and the Cyrillic alphabet. With respect to languages spoken by less than 20 percent of the population of a unit of local self-government, the local authorities shall decide on their use in public bodies.
Article 8
(1) The fundamental values of the constitutional order of the Republic of Macedonia are:
− the basic freedoms and rights of the individual and citizen, recognized in international law and set down in the Constitution;
− equitable representation of persons belonging to all communities in public bodies at all levels and in other areas of public life;

…

Article 19
(1) The freedom of religious confession is guaranteed.
(2) The right to express one's faith freely and publicly, individually or with others is guaranteed.
(3) The Macedonian Orthodox Church, the Islamic Religious Community in Macedonia, the Catholic Church, and other Religious communities and groups are separate from the state and equal before the law.
(4) The Macedonian Orthodox Church, the Islamic Religious Community in Macedonia, the Catholic Church, and other Religious communities and groups are free to establish schools and other social and charitable institutions, by ways of a procedure regulated by law.

Article 48
(1) Members of communities have a right freely to express, foster and develop their identity and community attributes, and to use their community symbols.
(2) The Republic guarantees the protection of the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of all communities.
(3) Members of communities have the right to establish institutions for culture, art, science and education, as well as scholarly and other associations for the expression, fostering and development of their identity.
(4) Members of communities have the right to instruction in their language in primary and secondary education, as determined by law. In schools where education is carried out in another language, the Macedonian language is also studied.

Article 56
…
(2) The Republic guarantees the protection, promotion and enhancement of the historical and artistic heritage of Macedonia and all communities in Macedonia and the treasures of which it is composed, regardless of their legal status. The law regulates the mode and conditions under which specific items of general interest for the Republic can be ceded for use.

Article 69
…
(2) For laws that directly affect culture, use of language, education, personal documentation, and use of symbols, the Assembly makes decisions
by a majority vote of the Representatives attending, within which there must be a majority of the votes of the Representatives attending who claim to belong to the communities not in the majority in the population of Macedonia. In the event of a dispute within the Assembly regarding the application of this provision, the Committee on Inter-Community Relations shall resolve the dispute.

Article 77

(1) The Assembly elects the Public Attorney by a majority vote of the total number of Representatives, within which there must be a majority of the votes of the total number of Representatives claiming to belong to the communities not in the majority in the population of Macedonia.

(2) The Public Attorney protects the constitutional rights and legal rights of citizens when violated by bodies of state administration and by other bodies and organizations with public mandates. The Public Attorney shall give particular attention to safeguarding the principles of non-discrimination and equitable representation of communities in public bodies at all levels and in other areas of public life.

…

Article 78

(1) The Assembly shall establish a Committee for Inter-Community Relations.

(2) The Committee consists of seven members each from the ranks of the Macedonians and Albanians within the Assembly, and five members from among the Turks, Vlachs, Romanies and two other communities. The five members each shall be from a different community; if fewer than five other communities are represented in the Assembly, the Public Attorney, after consultation with relevant community leaders, shall propose the remaining members from outside the Assembly.

(3) The Assembly elects the members of the Committee.

(4) The Committee considers issues of inter-community relations in the Republic and makes appraisals and proposals for their solution.

(5) The Assembly is obliged to take into consideration the appraisals and proposals of the Committee and to make decisions regarding them.

(6) In the event of a dispute among members of the Assembly regarding the application of the voting procedure specified in Article 69(2), the Committee shall decide by majority vote whether the procedure applies.

Article 84

The President of the Republic of Macedonia

…

- proposes the members of the Council for Inter-Ethnic Relations; (to be deleted) …

Article 86

(1) The President of the Republic is President of the Security Council of the Republic of Macedonia.
(2) The Security Council of the Republic is composed of the President of the Republic, the President of the Assembly, the Prime Minister, the Ministers heading the bodies of state administration in the fields of security, defence and foreign affairs and three members appointed by the President of the Republic. In appointing the three members, the President shall ensure that the Security Council as a whole equitably reflects the composition of the population of Macedonia.

(3) The Council considers issues relating to the security and defence of the Republic and makes policy proposals to the Assembly and the Government.

Article 104

(1) The Republican Judicial Council is composed of seven members.

(2) The Assembly elects the members of the Council. Three of the members shall be elected by a majority vote of the total number of Representatives, within which there must be a majority of the votes of the total number of Representatives claiming to belong to the communities not in the majority in the population of Macedonia.

…

Article 109

(1) The Constitutional Court of Macedonia is composed of nine judges.

(2) The Assembly elects six of the judges to the Constitutional Court by a majority vote of the total number of Representatives. The Assembly elects three of the judges by a majority vote of the total number of Representatives, within which there must be a majority of the votes of the total number of Representatives claiming to belong to the communities not in the majority in the population of Macedonia.

…

Article 114

…

(5) Local self-government is regulated by a law adopted by a two-thirds majority vote of the total number of Representatives, within which there must be a majority of the votes of the total number of Representatives claiming to belong to the communities not in the majority in the population of Macedonia. The laws on local finances, local elections, boundaries of municipalities, and the city of Skopje shall be adopted by a majority vote of the Representatives attending, within which there must be a majority of the votes of the Representatives attending who claim to belong to the communities not in the majority in the population of Macedonia.

Article 115

(1) In units of local self-government, citizens directly and through representatives participate in decision-making on issues of local relevance particularly in the fields of public services, urban and rural planning, environmental protection, local economic development, local finances, communal activities, culture, sport, social security and child care, education, health care and other fields determined by law.
Article 131

(1) The decision to initiate a change in the Constitution is made by the Assembly by a two-thirds majority vote of the total number of Representatives.

(2) The draft amendment to the Constitution is confirmed by the Assembly by a majority vote of the total number of Representatives and then submitted to public debate.

(3) The decision to change the Constitution is made by the Assembly by a two-thirds majority vote of the total number of Representatives.

(4) A decision to amend the Preamble, the articles on local self-government, Article 131, any provision relating to the rights of members of communities, including in particular Articles 7, 8, 9, 19, 48, 56, 69, 77, 78, 86, 104 and 109, as well as a decision to add any new provision relating to the subject matter of such provisions and articles, shall require a two-thirds majority vote of the total number of Representatives, within which there must be a majority of the votes of the total number of Representatives claiming to belong to the communities not in the majority in the population of Macedonia.

(5) The change in the Constitution is declared by the Assembly.
ANNEX B

LEGISLATIVE MODIFICATIONS

The parties will take all necessary measures to ensure the adoption of the legislative changes set forth hereafter within the time limits specified.

1. Law on Local Self-Government

The Assembly shall adopt within 45 days from the signing of the Framework Agreement a revised Law on Local Self-Government. This revised Law shall in no respect be less favorable to the units of local self-government and their autonomy than the draft Law proposed by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia in March 2001. The Law shall include competencies relating to the subject matters set forth in Section 3.1 of the Framework Agreement as additional independent competencies of the units of local self-government, and shall conform to Section 6.6 of the Framework Agreement. In addition, the Law shall provide that any State standards or procedures established in any laws concerning areas in which municipalities have independent competencies shall be limited to those which cannot be established as effectively at the local level; such laws shall further promote the municipalities’ independent exercise of their competencies.

2. Law on Local Finance

The Assembly shall adopt by the end of the term of the present Assembly a law on local self-government finance to ensure that the units of local self-government have sufficient resources to carry out their tasks under the revised Law on Local Self-Government. In particular, the law shall:

- Enable and make responsible units of local self-government for raising a substantial amount of tax revenue;
- Provide for the transfer to the units of local self-government of a part of centrally raised taxes that corresponds to the functions of the units of local self-government and that takes account of the collection of taxes on their territories; and
- Ensure the budgetary autonomy and responsibility of the units of local self-government within their areas of competence.

3. Law on Municipal Boundaries

The Assembly shall adopt by the end of 2002 a revised law on municipal boundaries, taking into account the results of the census and the relevant guidelines set forth in the Law on Local Self-Government.

4. Laws Pertaining to Police Located in the Municipalities

The Assembly shall adopt before the end of the term of the present Assembly provisions ensuring:

- That each local head of the police is selected by the council of the municipality concerned from a list of not fewer than three candidates proposed by the Ministry of the Interior, among whom at least one candidate shall belong to the community in the majority in the municipality. In the event the municipal council fails to select any of the candidates proposed within 15 days, the Ministry of the Interior shall
propose a second list of not fewer than three new candidates, among whom at least one candidate shall belong to the community in the majority in the municipality. If the municipal council again fails to select any of the candidates proposed within 15 days, the Minister of the Interior, after consultation with the Government, shall select the local head of police from among the two lists of candidates proposed by the Ministry of the Interior as well as three additional candidates proposed by the municipal council;

- That each local head of the police informs regularly and upon request the council of the municipality concerned;
- That a municipal council may make recommendations to the local head of police in areas including public security and traffic safety; and
- That a municipal council may adopt annually a report regarding matters of public safety, which shall be addressed to the Minister of the Interior and the Public Attorney (Ombudsman).

5. Laws on the Civil Service and Public Administration

The Assembly shall adopt by the end of the term of the present Assembly amendments to the laws on the civil service and public administration to ensure equitable representation of communities in accordance with Section 4.2 of the Framework Agreement.

6. Law on Electoral Districts

The Assembly shall adopt by the end of 2002 a revised Law on Electoral Districts, taking into account the results of the census and the principles set forth in the Law on the Election of Members for the Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia.

7. Rules of the Assembly

The Assembly shall amend by the end of the term of the present Assembly its Rules of Procedure to enable the use of the Albanian language in accordance with Section 6.5 of the Framework Agreement, paragraph 8 below, and the relevant amendments to the Constitution set forth in Annex A.

8. Laws Pertinent to the Use of Languages

The Assembly shall adopt by the end of the term of the present Assembly new legislation regulating the use of languages in the organs of the Republic of Macedonia. This legislation shall provide that:

- Representatives may address plenary sessions and working bodies of the Assembly in languages referred to in Article 7, paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Constitution (as amended in accordance with Annex A);
- Laws shall be published in the languages referred to in Article 7, paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Constitution (as amended in accordance with Annex A); and
- All public officials may write their names in the alphabet of any language referred to in Article 7, paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Constitution (as amended in accordance with Annex A) on any official documents.

The Assembly also shall adopt by the end of the term of the present Assembly new legislation on the issuance of personal documents.
The Assembly shall amend by the end of the term of the present Assembly all relevant laws to make their provisions on the use of languages fully compatible with Section 6 of the Framework Agreement.

9. Law on the Public Attorney

The Assembly shall amend by the end of 2002 the Law on the Public Attorney as well as the other relevant laws to ensure:

− That the Public Attorney shall undertake actions to safeguard the principles of non-discrimination and equitable representation of communities in public bodies at all levels and in other areas of public life, and that there are adequate resources and personnel within his office to enable him to carry out this function;
− That the Public Attorney establishes decentralized offices;
− That the budget of the Public Attorney is voted separately by the Assembly;
− That the Public Attorney shall present an annual report to the Assembly and, where appropriate, may upon request present reports to the councils of municipalities in which decentralized offices are established; and
− That the powers of the Public Attorney are enlarged:
  − To grant to him access to and the opportunity to examine all official documents, it being understood that the Public Attorney and his staff will not disclose confidential information;
  − To enable the Public Attorney to suspend, pending a decision of the competent court, the execution of an administrative act, if he determines that the act may result in an irreparable prejudice to the rights of the interested person; and
  − To give to the Public Attorney the right to contest the conformity of laws with the Constitution before the Constitutional Court.

10. Other Laws

The Assembly shall enact all legislative provisions that may be necessary to give full effect to the Framework Agreement and amend or abrogate all provisions incompatible with the Framework Agreement.
ANNEX C
IMPLEMENTATION AND CONFIDENCE-BUILDING MEASURES

1. International Support

1.1. The parties invite the international community to facilitate, monitor and assist in the implementation of the provisions of the Framework Agreement and its Annexes, and request such efforts to be coordinated by the EU in cooperation with the Stabilization and Association Council.

2. Census and Elections

2.1. The parties confirm the request for international supervision by the Council of Europe and the European Commission of a census to be conducted in October 2001.

2.2. Parliamentary elections will be held by 27 January 2002. International organizations, including the OSCE, will be invited to observe these elections.

3. Refugee Return, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction

3.1. All parties will work to ensure the return of refugees who are citizens or legal residents of Macedonia and displaced persons to their homes within the shortest possible timeframe, and invite the international community and in particular UNHCR to assist in these efforts.

3.2. The Government with the participation of the parties will complete an action plan within 30 days after the signature of the Framework Agreement for rehabilitation of and reconstruction in areas affected by the hostilities. The parties invite the international community to assist in the formulation and implementation of this plan.

3.3. The parties invite the European Commission and the World Bank to rapidly convene a meeting of international donors after adoption in the Assembly of the Constitutional amendments in Annex A and the revised Law on Local Self-Government to support the financing of measures to be undertaken for the purpose of implementing the Framework Agreement and its Annexes, including measures to strengthen local self-government and reform the police services, to address macro-financial assistance to the Republic of Macedonia, and to support the rehabilitation and reconstruction measures identified in the action plan identified in paragraph 3.2.

4. Development of Decentralized Government

4.1. The parties invite the international community to assist in the process of strengthening local self-government. The international community should in particular assist in preparing the necessary legal amendments related to financing mechanisms for strengthening the financial basis of municipalities and building their financial management capabilities, and in amending the law on the boundaries of municipalities.

5. Non-Discrimination and Equitable Representation

5.1. Taking into account i.a. the recommendations of the already established governmental commission, the parties will take concrete action to increase the representation of members of communities not in the majority in Macedonia in public administration, the military, and public
enterprises, as well as to improve their access to public financing for business development.

5.2. The parties commit themselves to ensuring that the police services will by 2004 generally reflect the composition and distribution of the population of Macedonia. As initial steps toward this end, the parties commit to ensuring that 500 new police officers from communities not in the majority in the population of Macedonia will be hired and trained by July 2002, and that these officers will be deployed to the areas where such communities live. The parties further commit that 500 additional such officers will be hired and trained by July 2003, and that these officers will be deployed on a priority basis to the areas throughout Macedonia where such communities live. The parties invite the international community to support and assist with the implementation of these commitments, in particular through screening and selection of candidates and their training. The parties invite the OSCE, the European Union, and the United States to send an expert team as quickly as possible in order to assess how best to achieve these objectives.

5.3. The parties also invite the OSCE, the European Union, and the United States to increase training and assistance programs for police, including:
- professional, human rights, and other training;
- technical assistance for police reform, including assistance in screening, selection and promotion processes;
- development of a code of police conduct;
- cooperation with respect to transition planning for hiring and deployment of police officers from communities not in the majority in Macedonia; and
- deployment as soon as possible of international monitors and police advisors in sensitive areas, under appropriate arrangements with relevant authorities.

5.4. The parties invite the international community to assist in the training of lawyers, judges and prosecutors from members of communities not in the majority in Macedonia in order to be able to increase their representation in the judicial system.

6. Culture, Education and Use of Languages

6.1. The parties invite the international community, including the OSCE, to increase its assistance for projects in the area of media in order to further strengthen radio, TV and print media, including Albanian language and multiethnic media. The parties also invite the international community to increase professional media training programs for members of communities not in the majority in Macedonia. The parties also invite the OSCE to continue its efforts on projects designed to improve interethnic relations.

6.2. The parties invite the international community to provide assistance for the implementation of the Framework Agreement in the area of higher education.

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