Society Building in Bosnia: A Critique of Post-Dayton Peacebuilding Efforts

By Carlos L. Yordán

INTRODUCTION

The recent rise of intrastate wars has been accompanied by an augmentation of peacemaking efforts conducted by a multiple range of state and non-state actors. For the sake of simplicity, peacemaking can be explained as a process composed of three interrelated stages: (a) pre-settlement activities designed to move parties closer to mediation or negotiation; (b) settlement-making efforts and the drafting of peace agreements that promote new social structures that increase cooperation between contending parties; and (c) post-settlement peacebuilding, which is the implementation of a negotiated or mediated agreement.

This investigation pays close attention to the last of these stages. Judging from the many challenges peacebuilding efforts face in post-Dayton Bosnia and Herzegovina,[1] it can be said that traditional conceptions of peacebuilding have to be reconsidered if a self-sustaining peace is to become a reality in this country. Other cases, Kosovo and Afghanistan being the most recent, also show how traditional conceptions of peacebuilding have failed to institute conditions of self-sustaining peace. It is therefore not surprising that a growing literature has emerged critiquing mainstream understandings of peacebuilding,[2] while also calling for new concepts and practices that can advance the ideals of a positive peace.

Although these studies' findings influence this investigation, it differs from them by its intent to provide a critical understanding of peacebuilding in the context of post-Dayton Bosnia. Such an understanding is motivated by normative concerns and by the belief that peacebuilding efforts should establish the institutional foundations of a self-sustaining peace. Self-sustaining peace means the cessation of hostilities, as well as the creation of social orders that enable individuals in post-settlement situations to fulfill their potentials, without worries that members of other ethnic communities will renew the fighting.

Motivated by critical-theoretical thinking,[3] this investigation does not only assess peacebuilding efforts in Bosnia, but also suggests an alternative program that might empower Bosnia's citizens to construct a social order that best represents their needs and interests. Before going further, it is important to emphasize that this investigation's alternative is still more of a "promissory note," as a theoretical framework that has

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not been actualized. [4] Thus, this investigation also aims to encourage further debate on the viability of current peacebuilding efforts in post-Dayton Bosnia as a way of creating new practices that can make peace self-sustaining in this war-torn society.

This investigation is divided into two parts. The first demonstrates how traditional conceptions of peacebuilding promote peace by way of state-building mechanisms. It also shows why these mechanisms have not been able to establish a self-sustaining peace in Bosnia. Noting this reality, part two presents an alternative peacebuilding program for Bosnia. The program proposes that a self-sustaining peace can be achieved by way of "society-building mechanisms of conflict resolution."[5]

I. TRADITIONAL PEACEBUILDING: THE CASE OF BOSNIA

Peacebuilding efforts can be divided into several core activities: (a) the delivery of humanitarian relief; (b) the demobilization of armed forces; (c) the deployment of peacekeeping and other policing related missions; (d) democracy-building; (e) economic reconstruction; and (f) inter-ethnic reconciliation. While all these activities are important for the success of peacebuilding operations, recent research suggests that international agents in post-settlement situations put a heavier premium on all but the last.[6] This is interesting because the success of peacebuilding missions can only be gauged if combatants are willing to transform their contentious relationships and create new patterns of cooperative interaction that promote new social structures and make peace a reality.

As seen in post-Dayton Bosnia, the delivery of humanitarian relief is usually pursued in the early stages of post-settlement missions, while the other activities are at the center of the work carried out throughout peacemaking. Indeed, the implementation of the *General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina* (GFA) has been aimed at strengthening the structures of the new central state. As, Wolfgang Petritsch, the third High Representative, argued, the general objectives of the international community are:

> *…to reform the courts, to strengthen the judiciary and central institutions like the presidency and the council of ministers so that leaders have the tools to mend their blighted country. By creating a true civil society, a society that is based on* ethnic cohesion*, not division, we can enable the people to tackle corruption and other social ills for themselves.[7]*

In a recent interview, Paddy Ashdown, the fourth and current High Representative, states that building strong state institutions, including the judicial system, is the only way to address many of Bosnia's social ills.[8] As a consequence, the international community, under the auspices of the United States and the European Union, is in the business of state-building—the creation of a strong state in order to engender stable social conditions support democratization, market reforms, and social integration.[9]

Echoing mainstream theories of political stability, the leaders of the international community believe that "ethnically homogeneous states are more stable and durable

than multiethnic or multinational states."[10] In the case of Bosnia, it has been argued that the creation of a strong state can serve as a mechanism of social integration, bringing each ethnic group's leaders in contact with each other to create a new national identity that can institute cooperative relations and legitimize established social structures. In the end, this approach argues that cooperation between leaders at the state level will trickle-down to the rest of society.

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In theory, these state-building efforts should foster social stability. In practice, this can only be achieved in the long-term. Research demonstrates that in the short-term these practices are met with much resistance and can even lead to outbreaks of political violence: "Increasing central state claims for resources—for the material means of state-making and domination—intrude into and compete with preexisting structures of rights and obligations which tie those resources to sub-national collectivities and/or 'polities.' Conflict, resistance, and violence are…often the result."[11] Although outbreaks of political violence have been minimal in post-Dayton Bosnia, the ethno-national groups are still pursuing their "wartime goals by other means."[12] Cooperation between each group's leaders is not only minimal, but competition for control of the government and the economy has hampered the work of the state and has delayed the implementation of the peace process. Since the signing of the peace agreement, leaders of the ethno-national communities have emphasized that the protection of each community's social structures—which are not necessarily consistent with the values and principles of the GFA—is more important than supporting the values of capitalism and multiethnic democracy.

Indeed, the slow pace of peace implementation and the ineffectiveness of the central government in the first two years after the signing of the GFA forced the Peace Implementation Council (PIC), an *ad hoc* international body created to monitor the GFA's implementation, to augment the High Representative's political and economic powers.[13] The "Bonn powers" gave the High Representative the power to propose and adopt legislation when conflict among politicians stalled the legislative process, and to dismiss politicians who worked to prevent or delay the implementation of the Dayton Peace Accords (DPA).[14] Carlos Westendorp, the second High Representative who originally campaigned for the expanded mandate, and his successors Petritsch and Ashdown, have rewritten or imposed over 100 laws, spanning economic, social, political, and judicial issues, and have removed over eighty individuals from public office.

In the end, the PIC's decision to increase the High Representative's powers reaffirms the main objective of the GFA: the creation of a strong central state that

can bring stability to engender a new multiethnic identity that legitimizes the GFA's social structures. As Westendorp commented in his last report to the to the Secretary-General of the United Nations:

> *In the summer of 1997 there was still no true sense of state identity. As soon as I had been granted my Bonn powers, I brought into force on an interim basis provisional laws regulating the symbols of the state…. These measures have given the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina a growing sense of their country's identity.[15]*

The belief that the state is an important vehicle of social integration is the foundation for the fulfillment of other important objectives of the GFA: (1) reconciliation, (2) the institution of capitalism, and (3) the acceptance of democratic values and procedures.

Is this peacebuilding mission attaining its desired objectives? These initiatives have settled the conflict and even suppressed interethnic violence, but they have not introduced the foundations of a self-sustaining peace. While complicated by a myriad of problems, such as contradicting political principles,[16] the general failure of this mission regards its espousal of the traditional strategic approach to peacemaking. This holds true in at least two important respects.

First, the strategic approach is influenced by a view of politics that validates Max Weber's understanding of purposive-rationality, where actors in social situations compete against each other in order to fulfill their interests. Thus, a conflict cannot be resolved, but only controlled. The management of conflict via state structures is necessary in order to keep the social system working efficiently and in an orderly fashion. This way of thinking and arranging the social world has motivated international actors to concentrate their efforts and direct their resources to strengthen Bosnia's central state structure. While not directly addressing Bosnia's peacebuilding strategy, a World Bank study argued that the international community has virtually ignored the reconstruction of war-torn societies' social fabric.[17] Indeed, the problem is that traditional conceptions of peacebuilding take for granted that the formation of a state and the introduction of market economics can create the necessary conditions for peace to take place.

Second, and closely related to the first, the United States and the European Union's intervention in Bosnia was guided by their respective self-interest, rather than humanitarian ideals. American negotiators wrote the GFA with the assistance of Western European and Russian diplomats. While the parties to the peace talks could debate these provisions, they were not allowed to make many substantive changes. Through diplomatic arm-twisting, the U.S. forced the parties to sign the peace agreement, even though some of its provisions contradicted their self-interest. In the end, the GFA can be seen as an instrument of conflict settlement, rather than one of conflict resolution. It did not permit the leaders of ethno-national group to negotiate an ending to their war and it did not provide an incentive for Bosnia's political leaders to address the very problems that had led them to war.[18] Instead, a settlement was forced upon them, angering many of Bosnia's politicians and stripping them of their right to create a society that best represents their needs and interests.

Seen in this light, the establishment of a self-sustaining peace in Bosnia has been stalled by political leaders who do not agree with the GFA's provisions and by the international community's insistence that peace equals the peace agreement's full implementation. It is important to emphasize that while many nationalist leaders oppose the GFA because it challenges their position in society, moderate politicians have also expressed their dissatisfaction with the peace agreement because it does not empower them to change the political system crafted at Dayton according to the democratic and multi-ethnic ideals that allegedly inspirited the peace process.

The growing criticisms from within Bosnia have become so strong that in the first months of his tenure as High Representative, Petritsch presented a plan to give more power to the people so they could administer their affairs with little interference from international agents working in Bosnia, including his Office of the High Representative.[19] While Bosnia's citizens have welcomed this "ownership approach," it is important to note that the international community has continued to impose the peace agreement, while Bosnia's politicians have failed to execute its provisions. Even though this approach has not challenged the objective of creating a strong state as means to integrate society, it highlights the need to rethink the viability of the existing peacebuilding strategy.

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The most important question that must be answered is the following: can the current strategy foster a new pattern of inter-ethnic relations that makes self-sustaining peace a reality? While many policy-makers argue that state-building efforts can foster new patterns of cooperation between Bosnia's ethno-national groups, it is equally important to emphasize that these projects have been unable to transform people's attitudes and they have made reconciliation between the groups very difficult to achieve. As a result, the success of the present peacebuilding operation should not be solely gauged by how much the economy grows, by how many bills are passed by the legislature, or by how many pro-GFA supporters are elected to public office. Instead, this peacebuilding mission must make it possible for "former combatants [to] bury their hatreds along with their casualties,"[20] and enable them to build a new society that allows them to jointly meet their needs and interests. While this is easier said than done, this is the challenge peacebuilding operations face in societies torn by ethnic conflicts.

Part two of this investigation shows the theoretical foundations of an alternative peacebuilding program for Bosnia. It is important to highlight that this program does not spell out a set of activities Bosnia's leaders or international agents must execute in order to make peace self-sustaining. Instead, the program offers a set of themes, grounded on the research conducted by advocates of conflict transformation

and conflict resolution mechanisms to guide new peacebuilding efforts. Hence, this program is a strategy in the making—to call attention to the insights provided by these alternative approaches to peacemaking by those individuals currently debating the international community's role in post-Dayton Bosnia.

II. SOCIETY-BUILDING PROGRAMS AS AN ALTERNATIVE

The international community's peacebuilding strategy in Bosnia can be described as a successful failure. On the one hand, it was able to settle the war. On the other, there are no assurances that if the international community had exited Bosnia in the short-term, the war would not have restarted. Can there be a way of achieving a self-sustaining peace in Bosnia or in any society torn by ethnic conflict?

An alternative strategy for Bosnia should start by reconsidering mainstream understandings of peacebuilding.   If a strategic approach has been used to build peacebuilding programs that stress the importance of the state as an agent of social integration, then a counter approach is needed that stresses the importance of interethnic dialogue, social empowerment, and deliberative democracy. Achieving these goals can be done via society-building initiatives of conflict resolution, which are influenced by the tenets of multi-track diplomacy, as envisioned by Louise Diamond and John McDonald.[21]

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A society-building strategy suggests that social change should not be directed by the state or the international community, but through the interactions of these members in civil society's proceedings. Instead of building peace via trickle-down state-building strategies, multi-track diplomacy stresses the importance of "bottom-up" initiatives of social transformation. Hence, this investigation has envisioned a peacebuilding program that includes three interdependent efforts: (a) reconciliatory mechanisms of conflict resolution, (b) processes of political will-formation, and (c) the institution of reflexive structures of governance.

a. Reconciliatory Mechanisms

The movement toward political cooperation and the social integration of Bosnia has been hampered by strong feelings of hatred, mistrust and fear among the members of each ethno-communal group. A recent World Bank study captures Bosnia's divisions six years after the signing of the peace agreement. Participants in focus groups repeatedly said that a "low level of interpersonal trust" has led to "a decline in socialization and mutual help."[22] Noting the prevailing high levels of social distance and low levels of social capital, how can social integration be achieved?

Much social psychological research has demonstrated how perceptions influence human behavior. It is therefore necessary to deconstruct the negative images that

inhibit peace and find ways of constructing and nurturing new attitudes that foster inter-communal dialogue and cooperation. Therefore, attitudes and political identities are mutable. Just as each ethno-communal leader supported the creation of enemy images of the 'other' in order to mobilize members of the group to fight for a set of particular objectives, conflict resolution mechanisms can break these images and foment a culture based on tolerance, cooperation, and empathy.[23]

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To accomplish this normative-supported end, it is necessary to organize a series of interactive problem-solving workshops or similar conflict resolution mechanisms, where influential members of each community can meet and address issues of contention. Herbert Kelman's workshops on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict led him to conclude that the workshop's facilitation of unrestricted dialogue enables "the parties to explore each other's perspectives and through a joint process of creative problem solving, to generate new ideas for mutually satisfactory solutions to their conflicts."[24]

Even more importantly, this process of open dialogue serves as an instrument to deconstruct the ethnic identities that separate the conflicting parties and allow the construction of a new identity based on "relational empathy." Benjamin Broome's research on cross-cultural communication is especially important in this respect, as he shows how dialogical processes of conflict resolution can de-escalate conflict by transforming adversarial attitudes and nurturing a new "third culture" that emanates from these processes. This "third culture" is important because it provides the means for the involved parties to reconcile their opposing interests and develop a working relationship that resolves their conflict and builds a culture of trust and cooperation.[25]

In attempting to deconstruct the negative images and the ethnic identities that divide Bosnia, the organizers and facilitators of these conflict resolution processes must be very selective of the people they invite to these workshops. All societies have influential leaders at different levels. John Paul Lederach argues that influential individuals can be found at three social levels: (a) top, (b) middle-range, and (c) grassroots. The top level includes military, political and religious leaders with "high visibility," leaders who are usually involved in Track-One diplomatic initiatives. The grassroots level encompasses local political leaders, heads of indigenous non-governmental organizations, local relief workers, factory workers, construction laborers, and small business owners.[26] The middle-range level, and the most relevant for the purpose of this investigation, includes academics, journalists, business owners, local political and religious leaders, leaders of non-ethnic, civic-based political parties,

artists, actors, leaders of trade unions, and other influential people in the community.[27]

It is important to tap into the resources offered by the middle-range level. These individuals have the most influence on the other two social levels. If middle-range leaders from each community are brought together and can achieve a transformation of their attitudes and establish cross-communal working relations, people in the grassroots level might be more inclined to interact with individuals of other ethno-national communities. In fact, the promotion of a "third culture" will take hold once a portion of the population embraces this culture.

It is important to stress that the workshop facilitators should employ Lederach's elicitive approach, where the participants are encouraged to use their cultural context as a resource to craft their own solutions to their problems.[28] Organizers of these workshops must understand that even though violence has affected the pattern of pre-war inter-communal relations, there are still discourses, ideas, and institutions these communities share that might provide the first step to reconciliation.[29] Internationally-backed norms and values cannot be imposed upon these workshop participants, as the purpose of these exercises is not only to deconstruct the identities that have fostered social separation, but to also endow the participants with the ability to critically reflect on their own social condition, so they can create their own mechanisms of social change. This is not to say that the conveners of such workshops cannot propose ways of achieving social change. In fact, a healthy discussion of the shortcomings and potentials of proposed mechanisms can be a way of inciting participants to engage with one another to judge the viability of these proposed mechanisms, or to create new measures that might support the search for peace.

In all, a transformation of public consciousness will take place once middle-range communal groups start encouraging people at the grassroots and at the top social levels to interact with members of other communities. As a result, the potential of the problem-solving workshop is that it can build new communication networks by transforming negative attitudes into a culture of trust and cooperation. Inviting middle-range level leaders to take part in these reconciliatory mechanisms will create the foundations of a "third culture" that will spread across Bosnia and start the process of integrating the groups into new social contexts.

b. Political Will Formation

Once the foundations of shared experiences commence to develop and individuals from each community, especially at the grassroots level, begin to communicate, then the foundations of civil society will start taking hold in Bosnia. An integrated civil society will dismantle nationalist and separatist movements by deconstructing the political identities that fuel these social groupings. Reconciliatory mechanisms can break these images and foster new ones based on shared histories and values. To this extent, civil society empowers people to voice new political identities and enables them to create new social movements to shape society according to their needs and interests. As a consequence, new non-ethnic political parties will evolve and ones in power will have to change their stance to get the support of the new

electorate. Economic organizations, non-governmental organizations, community groups, women groups, and interests-based groups will also emanate from civil society's proceedings.

Thus, civil society permits the creation of a cohesive political community based on dialogue and cooperation, leading to the establishment of a new social order in which its citizens can feel included. Establishing "a legal order," Carla Hesse and Robert Post argue, "requires the prior existence of a community cohesive enough to justify the law's claim to speak, within its jurisdiction, in accents that are authoritative and universal."[30] While the GFA has established a legal order in Bosnia, it does not reflect the needs or interests of the people. The peace plan reflects the interests of a group of politicians that do not necessarily mirror the needs and interests of the country's citizens. In fact, Slobodan Miloševiæ represented the Bosnian Serbs during the peace negotiations at Dayton, while Franjo Tudjman represented the Bosnian Croats.

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Civil society serves as a tool to strengthen the "third culture" that results from reconciliatory processes and permits people to come together to express their opinions, to voice their hopes for a better future, and to influence the way society is organized. Civil society's mechanisms of political will formation will have an important effect in Bosnia. These new social movements will force political leaders to change their actions or resign from their positions of power. The organs of civil society delimit government prerogatives, allow the formation of political groupings, train future political leaders, and, most importantly, counter and de-legitimize the political identities, social narratives, and political discourses constructed by the institutions of the state and the international community.

c. Instituting Reflexive Structures

The last phase of this strategy will materialize once the forces of civil society institute new social structures of governance that reflect the needs, interests, and values of Bosnia's citizens. This should usher in a true participatory democracy and establish an open social system. The present state-building strategy practiced in Bosnia has instituted a closed social system, where people can only affect the way society is organized through voting. The danger of a closed system is that it is vulnerable to political and economic crises and outbreaks of political violence because it lacks any "safety valves."[31]

In essence, the institution of participatory democracy is consistent with the task of establishing a self-sustaining peace. It is important to remember that the cause of the conflict that divided Bosnia along ethnic lines and led its constituents to war was a result of the manipulation of political identities according to the interests

of the political leaders of each community. Manipulating these identities and dehumanizing the "other" was accomplished with relative ease due to the decay of political institutions that had averted opportunists from challenging the established order during the communist era. Consequently, the success of this mobilization practice was dependent upon the destruction of the structures that held the ethno-communal groups together, as well as the fabrication and spread of enemy images of the "other." While moderates of each community attempted to contradict these ethno-national dehumanization projects, they could not voice their messages because chauvinists and nationalists controlled Bosnia's social structures.[32] In essence, there was no civil society that could enable moderates to disclaim these projects.   More importantly, media outlets including television, radio, newspapers, and magazines, were mostly controlled by people who adhere to these views.[33] Overall, the war in Bosnia can be partially blamed on the closed nature of the society, which inhibited moderates from repudiating these false images and challenging the construction of competing ethnic identities that first led to the disintegration of Bosnia's social fabric and then to war.

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In light of this reality, preventing the recurrence of interethnic violence will take place once Bosnia's citizens, through the organs of civil society, can establish a social order that reflects their various needs and interests rather than those of a self-appointed minority. The institution of reflexive structures of governance, often legalized by re-writing or amending the constitution, or by transforming the structures set-up by the GFA in the case of Bosnia, serves as a conflict prevention mechanism that will assure that cooperation between the ethnic groups actually takes place. Nonetheless, attaining this social condition and increasing cooperation between the leaders of each community is dependent on the success of reconciliatory mechanisms, the spread of a "third," civic-based culture, and the flourishing of civil society.

d. The Role of the Bosnian State and International Community
It is important to reiterate that the success of this envisioned society-building strategy is directly dependent on the support and participation of the Bosnian state and the international community. It is equally necessary to re-emphasize that the participation of these two actors must be restricted—too large a role in this process might incite one of these to augment its power, organizing Bosnian society according to its values and interests. This must be avoided if a positive conception of peace is to be instituted. To understand the value of the state and international community

in future strategies incorporating a society building program, it is necessary to demarcate some of the activities they can conduct to aid the institution of a self-sustaining peace in Bosnia.

The international community has an almost infinite number of military, political, and economic resources that can be used to make peace self-sustaining in Bosnia. Militarily, the role that NATO troops are playing is vital in providing a secure environment, where middle-range leaders will feel safe to meet with other communal leaders in reconciliatory workshops. Politically, international non-governmental organizations have to facilitate these conflict resolution mechanisms. The United Nations (UN), and other regional organizations, can suggest different middle-range leaders that might be instrumental in supporting these processes and encouraging their constituents to interact with former combatants.

Equally important, individual nation-states, the UN, and other regional organizations have to nourish social movements emanating from the first phase of this strategy. It is important to train middle-range community leaders in capacity-building strategies, so they can construct citizen action groups, interest groups, and political parties. The United States Institute of Peace demonstrates that this is an area where the international community must be more active.[34] However, it is necessary to re-emphasize the significance of Lederach's elicitive approach. While many international actors have dismissed local practices as means to build new civic programs, these practices are significant in peacebuilding processes because they can engender social institutions reflective of local needs and cultural logics that "fulfill the dual function of both political socialization and permanent renegotiation of the rules of the game."[35]

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In addition, the international community must do more to support the creation of independent media organizations that question the activities of the state and the international community. This will keep the state's power in check, while diminishing top-level ethno-national leaders' ability to mold public opinion through party-owned media outlets. Last but not least, the international community must oversee the acts of the state and make sure that it is not attempting to impede the development of political movements that might eventually transform the structures of society. Thus, the international community must use its political muscle to ensure that the citizenry's vision of Bosnia becomes a reality.

Economically, the international community must not only re-build the economic infrastructure of the country, but it must do so in a balanced manner. If the current policy of assigning more funds to the Bosniak-Croat Federation than to Republika

Sprska continues, the levels of resentment betweenthe communities will increase. This will have negative repercussions on the success of this society-building program. It is also important to encourage the creation of small, indigenous businesses. These entrepreneurs will not only build the backbone of a re-vitalized economy, but they also will influence the way society is organized and delineate the powers the government will have in economic affairs. Other activities, such as the creation of unified financial and banking systems, will also assist in the economic reconstruction of the country.

Finally, it is important to offer economic and financial assistance to initiatives that attempt to integrate Bosnia's shattered social fabric. This is an area where the international community has not invested much of its vast economic resources. Susan Woodward finds that

> *the peace process in Bosnia is being driven by the decisions of donors about what they are willing to finance, when, and how. Whether that includes activities that can lead to reconciliation and a sustainable peace was not clear in the first three years of peace, although comparison with Bosnians say they need and with the experience in other cases of peace building after civil war suggest a major divide: between the needs of peace and the goals of international actors in the process"[36]*

Thus, a large amount of capital has been invested in fixing material aspects of society, but too little has been invested in the psychological and emotional aspects. The latter, and not the former, will provide the foundations of a self-sustaining peace in Bosnia.

Though flawed, the Dayton-endorsed state provides a working structure of governance that can move Bosnia towards the path of integration. It is important to accentuate that the state and its administrative, legislative, and judicial apparatus are not fully reflective of the interests and values of Bosnia's citizens. While the state's endorsement of democratic procedures and human rights is an important step in advancing a self-sustaining peace in Bosnia, a recent report from the High Representative's Office demonstrates how legislation to support human rights has not garnered much attention by the central state's legislative bodies.[37] Without the protection of these rights, the work of civil society organizations is compromised.

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This is surely a cause for great concern. The role of the state and its leaders should be to empower citizens so their opinions can influence Bosnia's policy-making structures. The state should not interfere with the society-building process, but support it by actively protecting and legitimizing it through legislation. If the state implements the changes advocated by its citizens, this will provide an incentive for people to join the institutions of civil society. Working with other like-minded

individuals, they can foster a new conception of society that fosters self-sustaining peace based on civic needs, values, and interests.

CONCLUSIONS

The international community has openly expressed its frustration with the pace of peace implementation in Bosnia. Although the country is doing better today than before the signing of the peace agreement, High Representative Ashdown is searching for new ways of fulfilling the international community's more immediate interests and strengthening the capacity of the Bosnian state so it can assume control of the implementation process. This has been complicated by the fact that the international community has started to direct its attention and resources to post-conflict reconstruction missions in Kosovo, Iraq, and Afghanistan, as well as addressing emerging problems in Africa.

As the international community considers its next steps in Bosnia, it must move away from the state-building program and embrace society-building mechanisms. This would not be a radical departure. In fact, it would be in line with Petritsch's "ownership approach," which Ashdown has vowed to uphold, but has so far not deepened. Petritsch's "ownership approach" was originally designed to increase Bosnian citizens' participation in the peace process. As part of this approach, he created a Civic Forum and a Consultative Partnership Forum. The former brought together middle-range civic leaders and the High Representative to talk about the implementation of the peace process, whereas the latter was intended to promote more contact between government ministers and international diplomats to design policies that would help the international community fulfill its interests in Bosnia. These fora were a step in the right direction, but they did not address the root causes of the conflict or empower Bosnia's citizens.

Indeed, one of the major faults of the peace process is that international diplomats are not accountable to Bosnia's citizens and their policies often disregard the opinions of the country's political leaders.[38] Even Petritsch, who was the most sympathetic to the idea of empowering Bosnian society, emphasized that Bosnia had to fully implement the negotiated peace agreement, even though many people in Bosnia have expressed their dissatisfaction with many of its principles and goals. In reality, the GFA's objectives of multiethnicity, democracy, and market economics are not in themselves problematic. The question is how to translate these goals into reality.

The international community has opted for a state-building approach, but as documented in this investigation, it has not been able to make peace in Bosnia self-sustaining. The state-building strategy must be accompanied by society-building mechanisms that empower people at the grassroots and middle social level to interact with each other and address the causes that led the communities to war. It is important to emphasize that this society-building program does not reject a role to Bosnia's central state or international bodies, such as the OHR, but in fact relies on their active support. A society-building program stresses the importance of citizens'

active participation in Bosnian affairs. This means that the state and the international community must pay attention to the demands of Bosnia's citizens and act on their proposals, voiced by means of civic organizations or elections.

Bosnia's fate should be in the hands of its citizens, not international diplomats. Thus, the international community should make Bosnia's citizens partners in peacebuilding, even if this means a new round of talks to rewrite the peace agreement. Ashdown should actively support problem-solving workshops that promote reconciliation and encourage the work of civic organizations by reinvigorating his predecessor's Civic Forum.

It has been eight years since the GFA's signing. The international community has settled and managed the conflict, but it has yet to be resolved. The main lesson of the last few years is that a self-sustaining peace cannot be imposed on Bosnia; it must ultimately be constructed and established by Bosnia's citizens and officials. A society-building program meets this requirement. Its actualization is easier said than done, as the international community has demonstrated little support for alternative peacebuilding programs. Getting support for alternative peacebuilding strategies may prove to be the greatest challenge for states and international organizations working in societies torn by war.

Notes

[1] The official name of the country is Bosnia and Herzegovina, however for the sake of brevity Bosnia will be used from here on.

[2] See for instance: John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (Washington, DC: USIP Press, 1997); Ronald Paris, "Peace-building and the Limits of Liberal Internationalism," *International Security*, vol. 22, no. 2 (1997): 54-89; Nat J. Colleta, Michelle Cullen and Johanna Mendelson Forman, *Conflict Prevention and Post-Conflict Reconstruction: Perspectives and Prospects, Workshop Report* (Washington: World Bank Post-Conflict Reconstruction Unit, 1998); Francis Kofi Abiew and Tom Keating, "Outside Agents and the Politics of Peacebuilding and Reconciliation," *International Journal*, vol. LV, no. 1 (1999-2000): 80-106; Kimberly Maynard, *Healing Communities in Conflict: International Assistance in Complex Emergencies* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999); and Ronald Paris, "International Peacebuilding and the 'Mission Civilisatrice,'" *Review of International Studies*, vol. 28, no. 4 (2002): 637-656.

[3] Critical-theoretical thinking maintains that theory must give insight to practical ways of empowering people to transform oppressive social systems. For more on this topic see: Stephen K. Leonard, *Critical Theory in Political Practice* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).

[4] I borrow this term from: Anthony Giddens, *The Third Way: The Renewal of Social Democracy* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998).

[5] Carlos L. Yordán, "Moving From Preventive Diplomacy to Proventive Mechanisms: Fostering Peace and Cooperation at Intrastate and International Levels," *Swords and Ploughshares: A Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 7, no. 2 (1998): 92.

[6] Abiew and Keating, "Outside Agents and the Politics of Peacebuilding and Reconciliation," 81-82.

[7] Wolfgang Petritsch, "The Future of Bosnia Lies with its People," *The Wall Street Journal Europe* (September 17, 1999). Available at: http://www.ohr.int [Accessed October 4, 1999].

[8] Paddy Ashdown, "Bosnia Has No Time, You Must Speed Reforms," interviewer: Amra Kebo, *Oslobodjenje* (3 May 2003). English copy available at: http://www.ohr.int [Accessed 15 May 2003].

[9] This understanding builds on Karin von Hippel's definition of nation-building exercises. See, Karin von Hippel, "Democracy by Force: A Renewed Commitment to Nation Building," *Washington Quarterly*, vol. 23, no. 1 (1999): 95.

[10] Susan Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy: Chaos and Dissolution After the Cold War* (Washington, DC: The

Brookings Institution, 1995), 21.

[11] Youssef Cohen, Brian R. Brown, and A. F. K. Organski, "The Paradoxical Nature of State Making: The Violent Creation of Order," *The American Political Science Review*, vol. 75, no. 4 (1981): 902.

[12] Susan Woodward, "Bosnia After Dayton: Year Two," *Current History*, issue 96 (1997): 98.

[13] For the original powers of the Office of the High Representative, see Annex 10 of the *General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina*. Available at: http://www.ohr.int [Accessed: 4 April 2000].

[14] OHR Documents. *Bosnia and Herzegovina 1998: Self-Sustaining Structures* (Sarajevo: OHR, 10 December 1997). Available at: http://www.ohr.int [Accessed 2 October 1999].

[15] OHR Documents, *Report by the High Representatives for Implementation of the Peace Agreement to the Secretary-General of the United Nations: April-June 1999* (Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina: OHR, 16 July 1999). Available at: http://www.ohr.int [Accessed: August 8, 1999].

[16] Mary Kaldor, *Old and New Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era.* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1999), 41.

[17] Colleta, Cullen and Forman, *From Reconstruction to Reconciliation*, 8.

[18] Carlos L. Yordán, "Resolving the Bosnian Conflict: European Solutions," *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs*, vol. 27, no. 1 (2003), 150-51.

[19] *Wolfgang Petritsch, "Bosnia and Herzegovina: On its way to a modern European society?" Speech Delivered at Royal Institute of International Affairs (London, 18 February 2000). Copy of the speech is available at: http://www.ohr.int.*

[20] Mario Calabresi, "Not To Reconciliation: Despite Western Intervention, Bosnia's Ethnic Hatreds Still Run Deep," *Time International*, vol. 150, no. 4 (1998): 38.

[21] Louise Diamond and John McDonald, *Multi-Track Diplomacy: A Systems Approach to Peace*, 3rd edition (West Hartford: Kumarian Press, 1996), 11-25.

[22] World Bank*, Bosnia and Herzegovina: Local Level Institutions and Social Capital Study, Volume 2: Findings and Recommendations* (Washington, DC: World Bank Group, 2002), 8.

[23] For more information on this issue, see: William Eckhardt, "Making and Breaking Negative Images," *Bulletin of Peace Proposals*, no. 1 (1991): 87-95.

[24] Herbert Kelman, "The Interactive Problem-Solving Approach" in C. Crocker and F. O. Hampson with P. Aall (editors) *Managing Global Chaos: Sources of and Responses to International Conflict*, ed. (Washington, DC: USIP Press, 1996), 501.

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[26] Lederach, *Building Peace*, 43

[27] Lederach, 41-42

[28] John Paul Lederach, *Preparing for Peace: Conflict Transformation Across Cultures* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1995), 68.

[29] Béatrice Pouligny, "Promoting Democratic Institutions in Post-Conflict Societies: Giving Diversity a Chance"*International Peacekeeping*, vol. 7, no.3 (2000): 25.

[30] Carla Hesse and Robert Post, "Introduction," in C. Hesse and R. Post (editors) *Human Rights in Political Transitions: Gettysburg to Bosnia,* (New York: Zone Books, 1999), 20.

[31] Raimo Väyrynen, "To Settle or Transform? Perspectives on the Resolution of National and International Conflicts" in R. Väyrynen (editor) *New Directions in Conflict Theory: Conflict Resolution and Conflict Transformation* (London: Sage, 1991), 12.

[32] Jack Snyder and Karen Ballentine, (1996) 'Nationalism and the Marketplace of Ideas', *International Security*, vol. 21, no. 2 (1996): 28-29; and Milan Miloševiæ, "The Media Wars, 1987-1997" in J. Udovièki and J. Ridgeway (editors) *Burn This House: The Making and Unmaking of Yugoslavia* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), 108-129.

[33] Miloševiæ, 112.

[34] USIP, *Special Report: Bosnia Report Card Pass, Fail or Incomplete* (Washington, DC: USIP Press, 1998), 5.

[35] Pouligny, "Promoting Democratic Institutions," 25.

[36] Susan Woodward, "Bosnia After Dayton: Transforming a Compromise into a State" in R Rothstein (editor) *After the Peace: Resistance and Reconciliation* (Boulder: Lynne Reiner Publishers, 1999), 163.

[37] OHR Documents. "The High Representative's New Year's Message to the Citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina" (Sarajevo: OHR, 31 December 2001). Available at: http://www.ohr.int [Accessed 5 January 2002].

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