

Carla, Andrea, "Community Security: Letters from Bosnia – A theoretical analysis and its application to the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina", *Peace, Conflict and Development: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 7, July 2005, available from <http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk>.

Community Security: Letters from Bosnia
A theoretical analysis and its application to the case of
Bosnia-Herzegovina

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Introduction

During the Cold War scholars of security studies focused almost exclusively on military issues. After the fall of the Soviet Union, the international community was "freed" from the danger of nuclear disasters. Consequently, researchers, international organisations, and governments have begun to give major importance to non-traditional aspects of security, such as terrorism, crime, and the environment. In particular, in 1994 the UN Development Programme elaborated the concept of "human security," which has shifted attention away from military threats against states to the various threats that can endanger the safety of people's life.² One of the categories of human security defined by the UNDP is "community security."³

Community security deals with threats to peoples safety that derive from the fact that human beings belong to different communal groups which do not necessarily correspond to defined state borders. This new concept of security has become increasingly relevant and topical in the past fifteen years, which have seen an outburst of ethnic-religious conflict and civil war, from the break-up of the former Yugoslavia to recent events in Sudan.

With regard to community security and the focus of this article I have set two objectives. First, I try to define the concept of community security. It is, after all, a recent development and it lacks a generally accepted definition. Different scholars and international organisations have developed various explanations of community security, which assume distinct perspectives and stress diverse aspects. Therefore, my aim is to

² UN Development Programme, "Human Development Report", 1994, <<http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global/1994/en>>, 06/15/05, p. 22.

³ UN Development Programme, "Human Development Report", p. 25.

Carla, Andrea, "Community Security: Letters from Bosnia – A theoretical analysis and its application to the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina", *Peace, Conflict and Development: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 7, July 2005, available from <http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk>. systematically organise these different approaches and provide a general theoretical analysis of this new concept of security.

Second, this paper focuses on community security aspects of the deadly civil war in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina was one of the first international issues to arise outside of the dynamics of the Cold War and thus one of the first opportunities for scholars to apply newer, broader concepts of security. Moreover this war assumed the form of a bloody ethnic conflict, and so provides an illustrative test for this new concept of community security. In particular, I analyse whether the international society responded to the Bosnia-Herzegovina conflict from a community security prospective. In regard to this, I will argue that the international negotiators were unable to stop this bloodbath because, by failing to apply the concept of community security, they misunderstood the conflict and did not provide the necessary tools to stop the war.

This paper is divided into two sections, each of which comprises two parts. In the first section I present a theoretical analysis of the concept of community security. I begin with a brief introduction to the concepts of traditional security and human security, emphasising their differences. Then, in regard to human security, I focus on its subcategory of community security, defining it and providing a detailed theoretical overview. In the second section I apply the concept of community security to the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina. I present the origins of the war, focusing on how international society analysed and intervened in the conflict.⁴ I then consider the characteristics of the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina. I focus on why the conflict assumed such a violent form,

⁴ The war in Bosnia-Herzegovina cannot be examined separately from the general situation of the break-up of Yugoslavia. Thus I refer also to the Croatia-Serbia war and the Slovenian independence.

Carla, Andrea, "Community Security: Letters from Bosnia – A theoretical analysis and its application to the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina", *Peace, Conflict and Development: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 7, July 2005, available from <http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk>. being characterised by ethnic cleansing and population displacement, and I emphasise the mistakes made by the international negotiators in understanding the war.

SECTION I: THEORETICAL ANALYSIS

Traditional security and human security

The traditional concept of national security, which dominated both the academic and the political worlds until the end of the Cold War, focuses on the state. In this traditional view of security, states are the principal actors because they are both the cause of the threat to security and what is threatened – what B. Buzan calls the referent object.⁵ Security in general, as A. Wolfers defines it, "in an objective sense, measures the absence of threats to acquired values, in a subjective sense, the absence of fear that such values will be attacked."⁶ In the traditional concept of security, the values that need to be protected are the territorial integrity and the national independence of the state. The necessity of protecting the sovereignty of the state prevails, even if it requires sacrificing other human values.⁷

The primary means that can be used to protect these values is the use of force. Therefore, security is strongly related to military power. However, this connection between security and power gives rise to the so called "security dilemma," namely the fact that the more a state tries to improve its security by increasing its military power, the less safe other states feel.⁸ Because traditional security is a zero-sum game, states are not

⁵ Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1991), p. 26.

⁶ Arnold Wolfers, cit. in Bjørn Møller, "National, Societal and Human Security. A General Discussion with a Case Study from the Balkans", <http://www.diis.dk/graphics/COPRI_publications/COPRI_publications/publications/37-2000.doc>, 06/15/05, p. 4.

⁷ Bjørn Møller, "National, Societal and Human Security", p. 19.

⁸ A limited alternative to the use of force is the balance of power between states, which gives a sense of safety, because states restraint from increasing their power.

Carla, Andrea, "Community Security: Letters from Bosnia – A theoretical analysis and its application to the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina", *Peace, Conflict and Development: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 7, July 2005, available from <http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk>. inclined to cooperate and international norms and institutions, which are supposed to represent the interest of the entire international society, do not play an important role in guaranteeing security.⁹

In the past twenty years, especially after the fall of the Berlin Wall, many scholars and international actors have pointed out the inadequacy of an excessively state-centric concept of security. This new perspective was clearly summarised by the UN Secretary General, who in the 1992 Agenda for Peace stated:

respect for its (the state) fundamental sovereignty and integrity are crucial to any common international progress. The time of absolute and exclusive sovereignty, however, has passed; its theory was never matched by reality.¹⁰

In response to the failings of traditional thinking surrounding security, a new concept has been developed – human security. Human security differs from traditional security primarily because it is people-centred. The individual, not the state is the referent object and the individual's well-being is the main concern. Protecting the integrity of the state is no longer a priority. Instead, the main values that need to be protected from states and non-state actors are the personal safety and freedom of the individuals. The safety of people is not only put in danger by inter-state military conflict. Rather, it is necessary to consider all of the factors and dynamics that affect the various aspects of people's lives, such as the global economy, the degradation of the environment, the development of the international criminal organisations, etc.

Human security has two main concerns. "It means, first, safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression. And second, it means protection from sudden

⁹ Jennifer Brower and Peter Chalk, "The Global Threat of Reemerging Infectious Diseases: Reconciling U.S. National Security and Public Health Policy" (RAND, MR-1602, 2003), <<http://www.rand.org/Publications/MR/MR1602/>>, 06/17/05, p. 6.

¹⁰ Boutros Boutros-Ghali, cit. Bjørn Møller, "National, Societal and Human Security", p. 19.

Carla, Andrea, "Community Security: Letters from Bosnia – A theoretical analysis and its application to the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina", *Peace, Conflict and Development: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 7, July 2005, available from <http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk>. and hurtful disruptions in the pattern of daily life."¹¹ When facing these issues, the use of force is no longer the primary mechanism of response. On the contrary, the development of international norms and institutions can, to a high degree, affect the security of individuals. Moreover, because human security is not a zero-sum game, collaboration between states brings absolute gains that benefit all of human society.¹²

Threats to individual freedom and safety are numerous and various. In fact in order to obtain human security, people should be free from threats such as hunger, disease, unemployment, crime, social conflict, political repression and environmental hazards. Therefore, the Human Development Report identifies seven main categories of human security: economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political.¹³ Even though these categories of human security are strongly interlinked and should not be analysed separately, the category that interests us for the purpose of this paper is what the UNDP calls community security.

Community security

As a category of human security, community security concerns threats to people's safety and freedom, which derive from the fact that human beings aggregate in diverse communal groups. Sometimes the physical demarcations of these groups correspond to the borders of states. Other times, communal aggregations develop at a sub-national level. Other times, groups transcend the border of states. In this context, community security emphasises the necessity to guarantee peaceful integration of different ethnic,

¹¹ UN Development Programme, "Human Development Report", p. 23.

¹² Brower and Chalk, "The Global Threat of Reemerging Infectious Diseases", p. 6.

¹³ UN Development Programme, "Human Development Report", p. 25.

Carla, Andrea, "Community Security: Letters from Bosnia – A theoretical analysis and its application to the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina", *Peace, Conflict and Development: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 7, July 2005, available from <http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk>. religious, and language groups that live in the same territory, in order to prevent or resolve intrastate conflicts.

Sharply defining the concept of community security is difficult because different scholars and international organisations have developed widely varying definitions of community security. There is no general agreement as to the meaning of the expression "community security." In fact, instead of "community security" many scholars use the terms "societal security" and "identity security." Below I will try to define the concept of community security, showing how it developed and defining its main aspects.

I identify three main approaches to the concept of community security, which I call the micro approach, the macro approach, and the meso approach. By micro approach, I mean those factors the institutions of the United Nations consider to be community security.¹⁴ By macro approach, I mean how Buzan, who is an expert in the area of international relations, initially interpreted the concept of what he calls societal security. By meso approach, I refer to the interpretation of the so-called "Copenhagen School," in particular the work of authors such as O. Wæver and B. Møller. The concerns of these three conceptions are of the same nature. They all derive from the fact that human beings collect together in communal groups; however, the logic behind them is different.

I) In the micro approach, the concept of community security derives from the concept of human security. Community security refers to the fact that individuals are members of groups and collectivities: a family, a community, and/or an ethnic group. Usually these groups provide security to their members, but sometimes they can also be the cause of a

¹⁴ In particular I refer to the 1994 "Human Development Report" of the UN Development Programme and to the 2003 "Final Report" of the UN Commission on Human Security. See UN Development Programme, "Human Development Report"; and UN Commission on Human Security, "Final Report", 2003, <<http://www.humansecurity-chs.org/finalreport/index.html>>, 06/14/05.

Carla, Andrea, "Community Security: Letters from Bosnia – A theoretical analysis and its application to the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina", *Peace, Conflict and Development: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 7, July 2005, available from <http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk>. threat. For instance, some traditional communities can continue unfair practices, such as slavery and the subjugation of women. But the main threat to community security comes when traditional communities attack each other. In fact, communities compete for access to limited opportunities. Sometimes, especially in the presence of economic hardships, this competition can assume violent forms and give rise to ethnic conflicts, in which individuals become the target of communal violence.¹⁵

This idea of community security is people-centred, like human security. The individual is the only referent object whose security should be protected. Sometimes the communities, of which the individual is a member, represent a threat because they discriminate against outsiders or against their own members or because they are in conflict with each other. The solution proposed by the micro approach to guarantee community security is also people-centred. Indeed it stresses the importance of the protection of human rights and individual freedoms, which aim to give each individual, of whatever community, the possibility to expand his or her capacity and improve his or her quality of life.¹⁶

In addition, in this approach particular attention is given to the protection of citizenship. In fact "having a nationality and being recognized a citizen of a country is a key element of human security, because citizens enjoy the benefits offered by responsible states."¹⁷ But many governments, which consider the existence of different communities inside their territory to be a threat to their sovereignty, exploit and deny citizenship to the members of these communities. In this way, groups cannot participate in the economic, social and political life of the society. This increases poverty, causes exclusion and

¹⁵ UN Development Programme, "Human Development Report", pp. 31-32.

¹⁶ UN Development Programme, "Human Development Report", p. 39.

¹⁷ UN Commission on Human Security, "Final Report", p. 31.

Carla, Andrea, "Community Security: Letters from Bosnia – A theoretical analysis and its application to the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina", *Peace, Conflict and Development: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 7, July 2005, available from <http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk>. persecution, sparks migration and raises the likelihood of conflict. To resolve this problem it is necessary to "empower people to increase their personal leverage on citizenship issues and to expand the protection which allows individuals their rights."¹⁸

II) The macro approach derives from Buzan's attempt to enlarge the agenda of traditional security by identifying several diverse sectors of security: military, environmental, economic, political and societal. Regarding this last sector, Buzan argues that societies are about identity, namely "what enables a group of peoples to refer to themselves as 'we.'"¹⁹ Threats in the societal sector arise when a community perceives the possibility that its survival as a community is endangered. A societal security issue is a threat to "sustainability, within acceptable conditions for evolution, of traditional patterns of language, culture and religious and national identity and custom."²⁰

In his early version Buzan identifies two main threats to societal security: *migration* and the *clash between rival civilizational identities*. Migration threatens societal security "by directly altering the ethnic, cultural religious and linguistic composition of the population."²¹ The clash between rival civilizational identities refers to the need to

¹⁸ Frederick D. Barton, John Heffernan and Andrea Armstrong, "Being Recognized as Citizens. A Human Security Dilemma in Sub-Saharan Africa, South, Central, and Southeast Asia, the Caucasus and Central and Eastern Europe: Lessons Learned and Policy Recommendations", 2002, <<http://www.humansecurity-chs.org/activities/research/conflict.html>>, 06/13/05, p. 4.

¹⁹ Barry Buzan, "Introduction: the Changing Security Agenda in Europe", *Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe*, Ole Wæver, Barry Buzan, Morten Kelstrup and Pierre Lemaitre (Eds) (London: Pinter Publishers, 1993), pp. 5-6.

²⁰ Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear*, p. 19.

²¹ Barry Buzan, "New Pattern of Global Security in the Twenty-first Century", *International Affairs*, vol. 67 n. 3 (Jul., 1991), p. 447.

Carla, Andrea, "Community Security: Letters from Bosnia – A theoretical analysis and its application to the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina", *Peace, Conflict and Development: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 7, July 2005, available from <http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk>. defend and protect society from the influence of seductive or overbearing competitive cultures.²²

As Wæver points out, Buzan's five sectors are sectors of state security.²³ This means that, whereas the micro approach focuses on the individual, Buzan's societal security maintains the state as the principal referent object. Indeed Buzan's society coincides with the concept of nation-state and its geographic references are the borders of the state. The author recognises the existence of societal threats at the sub-national level, but he affirms that they "cannot really be counted as national security issues."²⁴ Thus societal security is just a sector in which states can be threatened with regard to their social unity and identity.

III) The meso approach instead considers human collectivities as the referent object of community security. Communal groups are considered to provide the environment and resources through which human beings develop and prosper. Like Buzan, Wæver points out that "society is about identity", and how communities and individuals that are recognised in the community define themselves.²⁵ Society differs from other social groups because it has "a high degree of social inertia, a continuity often across generation and a strong infrastructure of norms, values and 'institutions' in the wider sense."²⁶ Therefore, the identity of societal groups is strong enough to "compete with the state as a political organising principle." With these premises Wæver defines what he calls societal

²² See Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear*, p. 123; and Barry Buzan, "New Pattern of Global Security in the Twenty-first Century", pp. 431-451.

²³ Ole Wæver, "Societal Security: the Concept", *Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe*, Ole Wæver, Barry Buzan, Morten Kelstrup and Pierre Lemaitre (Eds), pp. 24-25.

²⁴ Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear*, p. 123.

²⁵ Wæver, "Societal Security: the Concept", p. 24.

²⁶ Wæver, "Societal Security: the Concept", p. 21.

Carla, Andrea, "Community Security: Letters from Bosnia – A theoretical analysis and its application to the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina", *Peace, Conflict and Development: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 7, July 2005, available from <http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk>. security as "the ability of a society to persist in its essential character under changing conditions and possible or actual threats."²⁷

In this way society is the main object of analysis. Its survival does not depend on sovereignty or territorial integrity of the state, but is a matter of identity, which is the value that needs to be protected. Issues of community security derive from the fact that societal collectives and nations do not coincide. The boundaries of nations and states do not overlap, instead states can include diverse societal groups. When the state ceases to represent the interests of all its societal groups, the excluded collectivities perceive a threat to their identity. In this situation the request by these excluded groups for increased community security causes insecurity for the state.

Moreover, the main danger for community security derives from the "societal security dilemma," namely the fact that "one group's security spells insecurity for the others."²⁸ Therefore each group believes that "its well-being is conditioned by the disadvantages of the other communities" and, vice-versa, the well-being of other groups represents disadvantages for itself.²⁹ Because of this societal security dilemma, conflicts that arise from community security issues can assume exceptionally violent forms. In fact, this dilemma can intensify to the point that the goal of the conflict becomes the "elimination of the other's social existence."³⁰ Thus communal conflicts all too often manifest in practices of genocide and ethnic cleansing, "whose main objective is the removal of an

²⁷ Wæver, "Societal Security: the Concept", p. 23.

²⁸ Møller, "National, Societal and Human Security", p. 23.

²⁹ Enika Abazi, "Intrastate Conflicts, International Interventions and their Implications on Security Issues, Case of Kosovo", <http://www.diis.dk/graphics/COPRI_publications/COPRI_publications/publications/32-2001.doc>, 06/15/05, p. 8.

³⁰ Enika Abazi, "Intrastate Conflicts, International Interventions and their Implications on Security Issues, Case of Kosovo", p. 5.

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In this situation the distinction between military force and civilian population disappears, and the conflict is characterised by the killing of unarmed civilians based on their societal affiliations, along with the displacement of entire communities. Moreover, because women, children and youth are "the seeds of society continuation and generation," they become the preferred targets.³²

These three approaches differ because they stress diverse aspects of the concept of community security. The main difference lies in the fact that they emphasise and isolate different referent objects, namely what needs to be protected. The micro approach refers to the individual member of a societal group, who needs to be protected from communal discrimination and abuses and from communal conflicts. The macro approach emphasises the national collective identity of the state, which is put in danger by the consequences of the process of globalisation, such as international migration and cultural imperialism. The meso approach refers to the communal collectives included in a state, which can clash with the nation-state identity and with each other.

Yet these different approaches to the concept of community security do not exclude each other. Instead they are extremely interconnected. In fact, issues of community security simultaneously threaten individuals, states and collectivities. In this way, community security, although a category of human security, departs from the exclusive

³¹ Human Rights Watch, "Bosnia-Herzegovina", 1994, <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1995/WR95/HELSINKI-03.htm#P158_52943>, 06/14/05.

³² Abazi, "Intrastate Conflicts, International Interventions and their Implications on Security Issues, Case of Kosovo", p. 5.

Carla, Andrea, "Community Security: Letters from Bosnia – A theoretical analysis and its application to the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina", *Peace, Conflict and Development: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 7, July 2005, available from <http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk>. focus on the individual. Instead the concept of community security developed in this paper is also concerned with the collectivities of nation-states and sub-national groups, which can be put in danger by community threats. This connection between the micro, macro and meso approaches is clearly illustrated by processes of state fragmentation. Indeed, these situations often result in violent conflicts, in which the unity and identity of the state is no longer recognised, the sub-national societal groups threaten and fight with each other to be recognised and to contend for the spoils of the state, and individuals are caught up in the resulting communal conflicts.³³

As should be clear at this point, community security is a matter of identity. But this analysis has not yet given an exact definition of what constitutes a threat to community security. In most cases the presence of different communal groups does not trigger tensions and conflicts. Even when groups compete for limited resources and:

“communal identities become rigid, there is typically an element of any ethnic, religious or racial community, often a large proportion of the community that favours pluralism and negotiation rather than conflict.”³⁴

Therefore, to define threats to community security, it is better to consider the process through which “a group comes to perceive its identity as threatened” or individuals perceive discrimination because of their identity.³⁵

³³ In addition it is necessary to keep in mind that not only are these different concepts of community security interlinked, but also the entire category of community security belongs to the broader concept of national security. Thus it is connected with other sectors of security, such as the military, the environmental, the economic, the humanitarian and the political sector, and its dynamics affect, and are affected, by the dynamics in these other dimensions of security. For instance, environmental and economic crises decries the capacity of the state for distributing resources among its societal segments, reducing in this way the legitimacy of the state and increasing the competition between its communities. Also, when community security issues deteriorate to the explosion of violent ethnic-religious conflicts, issues of human security arise. Moreover, community security can spark traditional military security problems because internal ethnic-religious conflicts can put in question the territorial borders of states and because they can be internationalized - especially if the communal groups transcend the borders of the state. See Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde, *Security. A New Framework For Analysis* (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998), p. 17.

³⁴ Human Rights Watch, “Playing the Communal Card: Communal Violence and Human Rights”, New York, 1995, <<http://www.hrw.org/reports/1995/communal/>>, 06/10/05, pp. 9-10.

Carla, Andrea, "Community Security: Letters from Bosnia – A theoretical analysis and its application to the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina", *Peace, Conflict and Development: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 7, July 2005, available from <http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk>.

The main problem lies in the fact that, even if communal differences do not cause conflicts, they are easily subject to exploitation. Indeed "while communal tensions are obviously a necessary ingredient of an explosive mix, they are not sufficient to unleash widespread violence;" instead, most of the time, opportunistic leaders exploit ethnic-religious identity to gain popular support in their fight for power.³⁶ For example, the "communal card" is often used when governments are losing their legitimacy and are looking to find protection by identifying themselves with ethnic-religious identities.³⁷ In this situation, political leaders promote ethnic-religious tensions through policies of discrimination. Moreover:

"governments presiding over communal violence may also promote this view, since if 'ancient animosities' are seen as the 'cause', then communal violence takes on the appearance of a natural phenomenon which outsiders have no right to condemn and no hope to prevent."

Often, the international community has also sustained this view, using it as an excuse to justify its inaction and incapacity to intervene in situations considered "beyond control."³⁸

At this point the question arises of how to tackle community security issues, in particular in their most violent form: ethnic-religious conflicts. What guarantees peace is the presence of non-polarising arrangements that diffuse tensions. Indeed, potentially dangerous communal divisions can be overcome through policies of social integration.³⁹ These policies aim to include and guarantee the development of all the segments of the society, and seek to foster peaceful interrelations between them. In this way, each

³⁵ Wæver, "Societal Security: the Concept", p. 23.

³⁶ Human Rights Watch, "Playing the Communal Card", pp. 6-7; see also Møller, "National, Societal and Human Security."

³⁷ Human Rights Watch, "Playing the Communal Card", p. 7.

³⁸ Human Rights Watch, "Playing the Communal Card", p. 6.

³⁹ UN Development Programme, "Human Development Report", pp. 38-39.

Carla, Andrea, "Community Security: Letters from Bosnia – A theoretical analysis and its application to the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina", *Peace, Conflict and Development: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 7, July 2005, available from <http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk>. communal group connects its well-being to the well-being of the other communities, reducing communal cleavages and the risk of societal security dilemmas.

Moreover, in this respect it could be useful to use the micro approach, focusing attention on the needs of the individual, in order to reduce the chance of exploitation. Solutions should favour cultural integrity and human rights rather than territorial integrity and self-determination. In community security, as in most sectors of security, prevention and early warning are less expensive and more effective than later response. In particular, when governments reinforce intolerance and promote discrimination and communal violence, these policies should be condemned as human rights abuses and labelled as a danger to community security, before the situations explode.

Moreover, government can be involved in communal violence in indirect ways. Political leaders may promote it simply by tolerating it. In this case:

“failure to prosecute acts of communal violence is perceived as tacit approval and thus encourages abusive behaviour. In this way governments send the message that members of a vulnerable community deserve less respect and will receive less protection than other citizens.”⁴⁰

In order to reduce the explosion of ethnic-religious conflicts it is necessary to guarantee that perpetrators of such abuses are prosecuted.

Human Rights Watch has identified some mechanisms that can be used to avoid community security issues, and to counter their effects before they assume violent forms. Among them are processes to inspect early cases of violence against targeted groups, criminal prosecutions of those responsible for violence, and guaranteeing everyone's individual rights. When national governments are involved in communal violence, international society should condemn these policies, by protesting against the

⁴⁰ Human Rights Watch, "Playing the Communal Card", p. 11.

Carla, Andrea, "Community Security: Letters from Bosnia – A theoretical analysis and its application to the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina", *Peace, Conflict and Development: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 7, July 2005, available from <http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk>. government's failure to eliminate inequality and by denying international assistance and legitimisation.⁴¹

SECTION II: APPLICATION

Community security: the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina

The concept of community security presented above shows that in order to understand conflicts, especially ethnic and religious conflicts, culture and societal identities need to be considered. The Balkan conflicts, which were one of the first international issues to arise outside the dynamics of the Cold War, presented one of the first occasions for researchers and observers to apply a broader concept of security that included community security as understood in this paper. Indeed, the Balkan conflicts, especially the bloody war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, clearly illustrate the connections between sectors of security, in particular traditional, economic, human, and community security. To understand the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina it is necessary to consider the factors that led to the break-up of Yugoslavia.

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was a multinational federation, composed of various nationalities and ethnic groups (the main ones being Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Muslims, Montenegrins, Macedonians and Albanians) and divided into six republics: Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia. But the administrative divisions did not coincide with the ethnic divisions. Each republic contained minorities, such as Serbs living in Croatian Krajina and Albanians living in Serbian Kosovo. Bosnia-Herzegovina in particular was the most multinational republic,

⁴¹ Human Rights Watch, "Playing the Communal Card", pp. 15-16.

Carla, Andrea, "Community Security: Letters from Bosnia – A theoretical analysis and its application to the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina", *Peace, Conflict and Development: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 7, July 2005, available from <http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk>. being composed of 44% Muslims, 31% Serbs and 17% Croats.⁴² The relationships between the different communities and republics had long been affected by a history of traumas and tensions between the communities, and the country experienced numerous constitutional crises, because of demands for loosening the federation. Until the 1990s, the communist party managed to contain potential conflicts via constitutional compromises that gave greater autonomy to the republics.

Combined with ethnic divisions, the break-up of Yugoslavia and the following conflicts were sparked by two contemporary factors: a deep economic crisis and the end of the Cold War. For two decades the former Yugoslavia experienced serious economic difficulties, marked by high inflation and unemployment. The economic crisis exacerbated the tensions between the republics, which had competed for limited resources and had many ongoing disputes over the redistribution of income. Indeed, the wealthier Slovenia and Croatia provided most of the federal budget. The International Monetary Fund eventually intervened, imposing a typical neo-liberalist programme of shock therapy and austere measures, which further exacerbated the friction between the republics and undermined the legitimacy of the federal government. Indeed, one of the IMF conditions imposed on the weak central government was an order to regain economic control from the republics, which of course opposed the plan.

The end of the Cold War also contributed to the dissolution of the state. Yugoslavia lost its *raison d'être* with the end of the Cold War bipolar system. Thus its importance and the status it had in Western priorities diminished.⁴³ In this context, both Zagreb, and especially Ljubljana, began to feel that they were maintaining the other backward

⁴² Data in Andrea Kathryn Talentino, "Bosnia", *The Costs of Conflict*, Michael E. Brown and Richard N. Rosecrane (Eds), <<http://wwics.si.edu/subsites/ccpdc/pubs/costs/chap02.pdf>>, 06/16/05, p. 33.

⁴³ Talentino, "Bosnia", p. 29.

Carla, Andrea, "Community Security: Letters from Bosnia – A theoretical analysis and its application to the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina", *Peace, Conflict and Development: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 7, July 2005, available from <http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk>. republics and that Yugoslavia was an obsolete entity which represented an obstacle to their development, especially when the more wealthy republics began considering the possibility of future membership of the European Union.

These factors provided a breeding ground for ethnic nationalism, which republican leaders, such as Serbian S. Milosevic and Croat F. Tudjman, began to exploit. Serbian nationalism started to rise markedly in 1986 with the presentation of the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences Memorandum, in which many of the most influential Serbian intellectuals claimed that Serbs were discriminated against because they had been divided into different republics and had been subordinated to the hegemony of Croatia and Slovenia. Milosevic picked up on these rising sentiments by claiming the need for a modifying of Yugoslavian institutions, glorifying the history and the achievements of the Serbian population (such as the mediaeval battles of Kosovo and the fight of Serbian partisans against Nazis and their Croatian collaborators), and spreading rumours that the Serbs in Kosovo were being subjected to physical violence. In this context, Milosevic launched massive public demonstrations referred to as an "anti-bureaucratic revolution," during which he gave nationalist speeches that called for the unity and freedom of Serbia and encouraged solidarity among Serbs. In one of these rallies, held in Belgrade in 1988, he stated that "this is not the time for sorrow; it is time for struggle... this awareness has turned into a material force that will stop the terror in Kosovo and unite Serbia."⁴⁴

Other republican leaders made similar claims, portraying their people as victims and labelling Yugoslavia and Serbia as communist tyrants and enemies of democratic republics. Tudjman emphasised the unique character of Croatia, symbolised by its

⁴⁴ Cit. in Vesna Pesic, "Serbian Nationalism and the Origins of the Yugoslav Crisis", <<http://www.usip.org/pubs/specialreports/early/pesic3.html>>, 06/05/05.

Carla, Andrea, "Community Security: Letters from Bosnia – A theoretical analysis and its application to the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina", *Peace, Conflict and Development: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 7, July 2005, available from <http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk>. Catholicism, and reinforced the sense of unity among the Croatian population by developing strong connections with the Croatian diaspora in the USA and Canada. He soon began to speak of the sovereignty of the Croatian people. In 1990 he declared that the Independent State of Croatia, which existed for a short time during WWII, "was also the result of specific historic facts and the will of the Croatian people to create their own state."⁴⁵

Nationalist feelings rose when Milosevic reduced the autonomy of Serbian provinces Kosovo and Vojvodina. These actions sparked fear in the other republics, especially Croatia and Slovenia, of Serbian predominance and of a Serbian plan to identify Yugoslavia with a Greater Serbia. In 1990, the first multiparty elections witnessed the victory of nationalist parties in all the republics and opened the door for the dissolution of the states. Slovenian and Croatian leadership, looking to the possibility of entering the European Union, began to press for constitutional changes that would have made them practically independent. Serbian leaders, on the one hand, opposed this project, and on the other hand, began to claim that, in case of dissolution, any new Serbian state would have to be comprised of the entire Serbian population, including the Serbs of Krajina and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Bosnia-Herzegovina was caught in the middle, demanding more autonomy, but refusing at this moment to secede.⁴⁶

The situation deteriorated and in 1991 Slovenia and Croatia declared independence, so beginning the military conflict. Whereas the almost mono-ethnic Slovenia obtained a military victory in ten days, the war in Croatia, where the Serbs of Krajina, supported by

⁴⁵ Cit. in Vesna Pesic, "Serbian Nationalism and the Origins of the Yugoslav Crisis".

⁴⁶ Wiberg Håkan, "Societal Security and the Explosion of Yugoslavia", *Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe*, Ole Wæver, Barry Buzan, Morten Kelstrup and Pierre Lemaitre (Eds) (London: Pinter Publishers, 1993), p. 100.

Carla, Andrea, "Community Security: Letters from Bosnia – A theoretical analysis and its application to the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina", *Peace, Conflict and Development: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 7, July 2005, available from <http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk>. the Yugoslav army, rejected Croatian independence and claimed their right to self-determination, lasted six months. In January 1992, a cease-fire was brokered with the intervention of the United Nations. But no real political agreement was concluded and a large part of Croatian territory was not under the control of Zagreb. At this point the conflict spread into Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Today many scholars agree that international society has great responsibility for failing to prevent the escalation of the conflict. Actually, the early actions of the international society worsened the situation. In fact, in December 1991, whereas the United States decided that the Balkans were a European problem, the European Union, pressured by Germany, declared that "it would recognize those new states which applied for it and which satisfied certain criteria," especially human rights and ethnic and minorities rights.⁴⁷ This principle applied only to the constituent parts of the Yugoslav federation, namely the republics, and not to eventual sub-units such as the province of Kosovo or the region of Krajina. This criterion was developed by a specific commission, the so-called "Banditer Commission," which was also in charge of resolving the problem of future borders. The commission decided in favour of the principle of *uti possidetis*, according to which new states would have maintained the borders of the administrative division in republics of the Federation.⁴⁸

Even though the commission advised the independence of Slovenia and Macedonia only, the EU recognised the independence of Slovenia and Croatia, under pressure from Germany in favour of Zagreb and from Greece against Skopje. Recognition of Croatia

⁴⁷ Dominic McGoldrick, "From Yugoslavia to Bosnia: Accommodating National Identity in National and International Law", *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights* 6 (1999), p. 14.

⁴⁸ Enika Abazi, "Intrastate Conflicts, International Interventions and their Implications on Security Issues, Case of Kosovo", p. 6; Bjørn Møller, "National, Societal and Human Security", pp. 16-17.

Carla, Andrea, "Community Security: Letters from Bosnia – A theoretical analysis and its application to the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina", *Peace, Conflict and Development: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 7, July 2005, available from <http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk>. came, even if part of its territory was not under its control. Regarding Bosnia-Herzegovina the commission suggested organising a referendum, even if the Bosnian-Serbs had already made it clear that they would oppose independence by force while M. Boban, the Bosnian-Croats' leader, had already declared the autonomy of the Croat state of Herzeg-Bosnia. The referendum, boycotted by the Serbs, was held on 1 March 1992, and forced the other Bosnian group, the Muslims, whose leader, A. Izetbegović, had maintained a moderate position, to take a decision. He sided with the Croats.⁴⁹ Violence escalated, and, even though the country was on the edge of disintegration, the EU recognised Bosnia-Herzegovina and its government, led by Izetbegović, on 6 April.⁵⁰ The EU decision sparked the Serb's reaction and that very same day, R. Karadzic, leader of Bosnian-Serbs, declared an independent republic. A Lebanese style war broke out,⁵¹ which witnessed Croats and Muslims fighting against Serbs; Croats and Muslims fighting each other; and Croats and Serbs fighting against Muslims. In addition, the situation was worsened by the involvement of the Serbs and Croats' "national homelands," namely Zagreb and Belgrade.⁵²

The main loser in all of this chaos was the civilian population, which was subjected to bombing, ethnic cleansing, ethnic rape, and forced displacement. In fact, civilians became the main target of "military" actions, conducted by paramilitary groups, such as the Serbian Arkan's Tigers. To stop this humanitarian catastrophe, international society imposed sanctions, embargoes, no-fly zones, and employed UN peacekeepers (UNPROFOR), which should have guaranteed the arrival of humanitarian aid and the

⁴⁹ Håkan, "Societal Security and the Explosion of Yugoslavia", p. 103.

⁵⁰ Mary Kaldor, *New and Old Wars* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), p. 44.

⁵¹ Håkan, "Societal Security and the Explosion of Yugoslavia", p. 103.

⁵² Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe* (Cambridge, England; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 70.

Carla, Andrea, "Community Security: Letters from Bosnia – A theoretical analysis and its application to the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina", *Peace, Conflict and Development: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 7, July 2005, available from <http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk>. protection of safe areas. But none of these actions was successful. All sides were able to obtain weapons, the no-fly zones were repeatedly violated, and humanitarian aid did not reach the population. The main problem was that the UN forces had only a humanitarian mandate and were forced to maintain a neutral attitude, which impeded their ability to protect the "safe" areas.

On the diplomatic front, international society proposed a series of initiatives and plans, such as the Vance-Owen Peace Plan, all of which failed. They were rejected for the same reason, namely the fact that they did not recognise the military situation, in which the Serbs had obtained control of a great part of the splintered country and thus the Serbs refused to accept any plan that did not recognise their military gains.⁵³

In 1994, the scenario began to change. The Muslim and Croats reached a cease-fire agreement, established a federation (the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina) and unified their armies. In addition, the U.S. began to get more involved in the situation, and NATO engaged in Operation Deliberate Force, a two-week bombing campaign against the Serbs, who had meanwhile been recognised as the main actor responsible for the perpetuation of the conflict. Finally, the Muslim-Croat campaign, diplomatic pressure, and NATO's air strike forced the Bosnian Serbs to negotiate, and on 21 November 1995 the Dayton Agreement was signed.⁵⁴

Understanding the conflict

Why was international society unable to prevent this bloodbath? As M. Kaldor points out, the European governments, the White House, and the UN failed "to understand why

⁵³ Talentino, "Bosnia", p. 35.

⁵⁴ The Dayton Agreement has maintained a single state composed of two entities, allocating 51% of the territory to the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and 49% to the Bosnian Serb Republika Srpska.

Carla, Andrea, "Community Security: Letters from Bosnia – A theoretical analysis and its application to the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina", *Peace, Conflict and Development: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 7, July 2005, available from <http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk>. and how the war was fought."⁵⁵ But what exactly was not understood of the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina?

The purpose of this paper is to show that one of the elements that was neglected is the fact that the break-up of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was the product of community security issues.⁵⁶ As stated above, these issues have been exploited by unscrupulous political leaders, such as Milosevic, in the fight to retain and increase their power. Whereas the relations between the Yugoslav communal groups deteriorated due to economic hardships, Milosevic's nationalist claims raised fear in Zagreb and Ljubljana of impending Serbian domination. Therefore, Croatians and Slovenians began to feel, or were convinced by their leaders to feel, that Belgrade did not represent their interests and that they should consider the idea of "Yugoslavia" as a threat to their identity and well-being. These fears gave rise to the Slovenian, Croatian and later Bosnia-Herzegovinian search for statehood, which became a community security problem for the Yugoslavian Federation and each individual republic, while also sparking a societal security dilemma. Indeed, the borders of the republics were not drawn up with consideration for ethnicity and a large number of Serbians lived in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Thus the secession of these two republics became an identity threat for Serbians, whose community security required that all members of the Serbian regions belonged to the same state. At the same time, the presence of large Serbian minorities became a community threat for the new state entities.⁵⁷ The fear triggered by these threats

⁵⁵ Kaldor, *New and Old Wars*, p. 58.

⁵⁶ Møller, "National, Societal and Human Security", p. 33; Håkan, "Societal Security and the Explosion of Yugoslavia", p. 106.

⁵⁷ Håkan, "Societal Security and the Explosion of Yugoslavia", p. 106.

Carla, Andrea, "Community Security: Letters from Bosnia – A theoretical analysis and its application to the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina", *Peace, Conflict and Development: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 7, July 2005, available from <http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk>. reinforced "the demand for homogeneity of population based on identity," ending in a vicious dynamic.⁵⁸

However, once Zagreb obtained international recognition, the internal conflict became an international conflict between Croatia and Serbia, both of which fought to define their borders. Therefore, the community security issues interacted with problems of traditional security. However, the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina remained a problem of community security, although heavily influenced by the attempts of Zagreb and Belgrade to extend their borders.⁵⁹ In fact, despite its claims, Izetbegović's government did not represent all of Bosnia-Herzegovina and had to face the attempt of Bosnian Serbs to join Belgrade or gain independence, and the ambiguities of Bosnian Croats, who commuted between the desire to join Zagreb and their loyalty to a cantonal Bosnia-Herzegovina.⁶⁰

Because the population in Bosnia-Herzegovina was so intermingled and no one group dominated a defined area, the goal of the conflict became to create ethnically homogeneous territories. The instrument chosen to reach this goal was what became the most notorious feature of the conflict, namely the practice of ethnic cleansing, which was directed against civilians, through which hundreds of thousands of individuals were killed and two million more were forced to flee.⁶¹ Therefore, the conflicts in Croatia and especially in Bosnia-Herzegovina were characterised by structural violence carried out by one communal group against another through ethnic cleansing.

The conflict was a civil war in the sense that it was directed against the civilian population. In fact, the goal of the war was to gain territory not through traditional

⁵⁸ Kaldor, *New and Old Wars*, p. 98.

⁵⁹ Møller, "National, Societal and Human Security", p. 34.

⁶⁰ Håkan, "Societal Security and the Explosion of Yugoslavia", p. 103.

⁶¹ Data in Human Rights Watch, "Playing the Communal Card", p. 167.

Carla, Andrea, "Community Security: Letters from Bosnia – A theoretical analysis and its application to the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina", *Peace, Conflict and Development: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 7, July 2005, available from <http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk>. military efforts, but through the control of the population. This control was not achieved with popular support, but with ethnic cleansing and population displacement.⁶² The strategy adopted consisted of placing villages, cities, and towns under siege. When the area was about to capitulate, paramilitary groups entered to carry out cleansing operations intended to kill any remaining civilians.⁶³ The population was trapped in the middle. Even while civilians were being shelled, local leaders kept them from fleeing by instilling the fear of a possible loss of territory, and with it, identity.⁶⁴

The European government, the White House, and the United Nations failed to understand this explanation of the conflict in time, and consequently for many years their attempts to stop the war were unsuccessful. These failures were justified by interpreting the conflict as a revival of anti-modern tribalism and primordial ethnic conflict, which could not be stopped. But in this way the practice of ethnic cleansing was considered to be a side-effect and not the main instrument of nationalistic projects aimed at creating ethnically pure areas. Assuming the fear and hate to be endemic, international society played into the game of the nationalists.⁶⁵

But not only were international negotiators unable to stop the conflict, their perception and approach actually aggravated and accelerated the violence. Two points need to be emphasised. First, attention was given to the concept of state, not to the concept of people. The conflicts were considered as being between Serbia and Croatia and between Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, rather than between Serbians, Croats, Muslims, Bosnian Serbs and Bosnian Croats. Therefore recognition of the states became the

⁶² Kaldor, *New and Old Wars*, p. 50, 98.

⁶³ These practices were directed especially against prominent people and intellectuals, in order to destroy the soul and the core of the community. See Kaldor, *New and Old War*, p. 52.

⁶⁴ Talentino, "Bosnia", p. 26.

⁶⁵ Kaldor, *New and Old Wars*, p. 58.

Carla, Andrea, "Community Security: Letters from Bosnia – A theoretical analysis and its application to the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina", *Peace, Conflict and Development: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 7, July 2005, available from <http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk>. "central issue."⁶⁶ With this approach the international society recognised the new states without considering the real situation of population distribution on the ground. German Chancellor Helmut Kohl justified recognition arguing that it would have deterred conflicts, because any aggression against the new states would have been considered armed attack under the Charter of the UN, implying in this way the possibility of international intervention. On the contrary, recognition caused the deterioration of the situation and intensified the conflict.⁶⁷ In fact, a state-centric approach to the concept of security was not enough to understand the dynamics of the war. Partition and recognition were considered as the only solution because the conflict was perceived only as a problem of borders and territories. But this approach ignored the fact that partition was the cause of the conflict, and that creating ethnically homogenous states had to require population displacement.⁶⁸

Second, besides this state emphasis, the international negotiators based their approach to the conflict on the administrative boundaries of the former Yugoslavia, which had been considered unchangeable. The Banditer Commission suggested transforming the administrative boundaries into state borders, failing to account for the fact that secession should follow ethno-national distribution. But because of the intermingled demographic distribution of the population, this solution was not only impossible, but it also deepened community security problems. In fact, it fostered the Croatian and Muslim illusion that independence could be easily obtained, while it also sparked community security threats for the Serbs of Krajina and Bosnia-Herzegovina, who were minorities in the new states.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Håkan, "Societal Security and the Explosion of Yugoslavia", pp. 106-107.

⁶⁷ Talentino, "Bosnia", p. 34.

⁶⁸ Kaldor, *New and Old Wars*, p. 59.

⁶⁹ Håkan, "Societal Security and the Explosion of Yugoslavia", 108.

Carla, Andrea, "Community Security: Letters from Bosnia – A theoretical analysis and its application to the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina", *Peace, Conflict and Development: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 7, July 2005, available from <http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk>. In addition, the European governments worsened the situation and increased the fear of the Serbian side by recognising rather than condemning Croatia, despite the fact that the Banditer Commission stated that Zagreb did not fulfil the conditions for recognition regarding minority protection and respect for human rights. In this way, the EU did not use one of the mechanisms, identified by Human Rights Watch, for avoiding the escalation of community security issues into violence, namely the necessity for international society to protest and deny legitimacy to any action that promoted communal violence.

The international approach served to encourage the practice of ethnic cleansing aimed at creating ethnically pure areas. If the conflict had been understood for what it really was, namely a community security issue intermingled with economic, political and human security problems, then the protection of civilians would have been the main priority.⁷⁰ Instead, as Human Rights Watch points out, international negotiators:

“have based their hopes for peace in Croatia and particularly in Bosnia primarily on the division of territory. The fact that such territory was acquired through the use of ‘ethnic cleansing’ and military attacks against civilians has largely been tolerated by international negotiators. Little effort has been made to facilitate the repatriation of the displaced, to protect civilians living in areas dominated by forces of another ethnic group, or to bring to justice those responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity in Croatia and Bosnia.”⁷¹

Conclusion

In this paper I have presented a concept of community security which brings together three different traditions of looking at community security threats, namely what I have called the micro, the macro and the meso approaches. In my view, a complete understanding of community security comes from considering these three approaches to

⁷⁰ Kaldor, *New and Old Wars*, p. 64.

⁷¹ Human Rights Watch, “Playing the Communal Card”, p. 186

Carla, Andrea, "Community Security: Letters from Bosnia – A theoretical analysis and its application to the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina", *Peace, Conflict and Development: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 7, July 2005, available from <http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk>. be interconnected. In this sense, community security simultaneously implies as referent object the individual member of a societal group, the national collective identity of the state, and the communal collectives included in a state.

I have also considered aspects of community security in the deadly intrastate conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The war in Bosnia-Herzegovina was one of the first opportunities to apply a broader idea of security, and proved to be an especially illustrative test for the concept of community security as presented in this paper. As was shown above, this conflict was a problem of community security mixed with economic, political and human security issues.

Following a political and economic crisis that reduced the legitimacy and the capacity of the Federal government to distribute resources among Yugoslav societal collectives, opportunistic leaders such as Serbian Milosevic started to exploit ethnic tensions to obtain popular support in their attempts at obtaining political dominance. Slovenes, Croats and latter Muslims began to perceive Belgrade as being an inappropriate authority for the representation of their interests. Zagreb, and especially Ljubljana, attracted by the possibility of future membership of the European Union and threatened by the backwardness of the other republics, began to look for a solution outside of the Yugoslav entity that appealed to the principle of self-determination. This situation sparked a community security dilemma, because not only did it threaten the existence of the Federation of Yugoslavia, but it was also perceived as endangering the Serbian population, whose presence in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina morphed into a threat for the new "willing states."

Carla, Andrea, "Community Security: Letters from Bosnia – A theoretical analysis and its application to the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina", *Peace, Conflict and Development: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 7, July 2005, available from <http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk>.

The concept of community security I have developed in this paper shows that a situation such as the one in Yugoslavia is at the same time a threat for the states (which change shape and often come to lack legitimacy), for the communal collectives (which fight each other and contend for the spoils of the state), and for the individuals (who are trapped in the resulting violence). But the international negotiators misunderstood the Yugoslav conflicts because they examined them from a state-centric perspective, which neglected people and communal collectives, and considered states as the referent objects.

In particular I have considered two points. First, because of this state-centric approach, partition and recognition were considered to be the only solution, and the new states were recognised without taking into account population distribution. Second, the international negotiators based their approach to the conflict on the administrative boundaries of the former Yugoslavia, which had been considered unchangeable. But, due to the degree of mixture of the population and the exploitation of ethnic tensions by unscrupulous leaders, partition was achieved through ethnic cleansing and population displacement.

In the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina, a state-centric approach to the concept of security was not enough to understand the dynamics of the conflict. The violence of the conflict, the impossibility of finding a solution, and the most notorious aspect of this bloody war, namely the practice of ethnic cleansing, could be understood only by referring to the concept of community security, as developed in this paper, which puts together the micro approach, the macro approach, and the meso approach. The international negotiators either totally neglected the concept of community security, or used only the macro approach, emphasising solely the Yugoslav, Croatian and Bosnian nation-states.

Carla, Andrea, "Community Security: Letters from Bosnia – A theoretical analysis and its application to the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina", *Peace, Conflict and Development: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 7, July 2005, available from <http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk>.

In order to properly handle issues of community security it is necessary to also consider both the micro and meso approaches. The micro approach to community security, with its focus on human rights and on the protection of the individual, offers solutions to reduce the chances of exploitation of communal tensions and can be used to actually improve human security.⁷² Using the meso approach, it is possible to emphasise not only the needs of individuals, but also of human collectivities and the necessity of their integration. Indeed, policies for social integration temper communal tensions and reduce the risk of the vicious dynamics that can arise out of a community security dilemma. Moreover, a broader concept of community security that includes the meso approach is necessary to answer the question of why communal identity can be so easily exploited, why the resulting conflicts are so violent, and why next-door neighbours are suddenly capable of killing each other.

Therefore, solutions to situations such as the one in Bosnia-Herzegovina should take into consideration a comprehensive understanding of the concept of community security and favour human rights and cultural integrity rather than territorial integrity and self-determination.

In conclusion it is necessary to remember that the various aspects of security are strongly interconnected, and in the case of Yugoslavia, especially before the eruption of the conflicts, community security issues were related to political, human and especially economic security problems. International society, in particular the European Union,

⁷² In this regard, the Dayton Agreement contains some innovative measures, that testify to a new understanding of security issues, which includes the concept of community security as interpreted not only by the macro approach, but also by the micro approach. In fact the agreement emphasises the protection of human rights and addresses issues of citizenship, considered to be a tool for avoiding exploitation of communal tensions and attaining human security. For more details on the Dayton Agreement see Dominic McGoldrick, "From Yugoslavia to Bosnia: Accomodating National Identity in National and International Law", *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights* 6 (1999), pp. 1-63.

Carla, Andrea, "Community Security: Letters from Bosnia – A theoretical analysis and its application to the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina", *Peace, Conflict and Development: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 7, July 2005, available from <http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk>. could have prevented the break-up of the former Yugoslavia and the exploitation of ethnic nationalism, if it required as a precondition for future membership the maintenance of unity, which would have had the effect of offering strong incentives for policies of social integration of Yugoslav communal collectivities. But this did not happen and history took weapons into its own hands.

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