

**US POLICY TOWARDS SECESSION IN THE
BALKANS AND EFFECTIVENESS OF
DE FACTO PARTITION**

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and

**IMPROVING US-RUSSIAN RELATIONS
THROUGH PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS**

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FOREWORD

We are pleased to publish this fortieth volume in the *Occasional Paper* series of the US Air Force Institute for National Security Studies (INSS). The decade following the Cold War has seen a rise in ethnic conflict, and the United States military has found itself involved in a range of humanitarian intervention situations. The US Commission on National Security Strategy/21st Century—the Hart-Rudman Commission—has forecast a continuation in this type of conflict and in concomitant calls for United States military intervention at some level. While the US military has expressed mixed attitudes toward this type of political-military mission, and while they have had to climb a relatively steep learning curve gaining experience and expertise in the range of “peacekeeping” operations, several issues have been identified as important to the success of current operations and to planning for future situations. These two papers identify, explain, and analyze two very important sets of those issues. They are presented here not as endorsements of US military intervention or as a “cookbook” of keys to successful peace operations, but as solid and sobering examinations of the complexity of this operational realm and of the unique military requirements and opportunities it presents.

In the first paper, *US Policy Towards Secession In The Balkans And Effectiveness Of De Facto Partition*, Evelyn Farkas addresses inherently non-military contextual challenges encountered by military forces during NATO efforts to make or enforce peace in Bosnia and Kosovo. She highlights significant problems that have emerged in both former Yugoslavian states; namely, that the initial progress towards establishing stable multiethnic states has been stalled by criminal networks and the lack of functioning central governments. She concludes that civil and military peace implementers must be more aggressive in administering the protectorates NATO has established in order to advance the political and economic reforms that are needed to

achieve a lasting peace. Her efforts help to detail the struggle of institution-building that accompanies peace enforcement and peacekeeping efforts.

In the second paper, *Improving US-Russian Relations Through Peacekeeping Operations*, Beth Makros and Jeremy Saunders use Bosnia and Abkhazia peacekeeping interventions as case studies to show the need for, and possible strategic benefits from, improving cooperation during combined or multinational peacekeeping operations. Not only do they outline the major weaknesses of Russian peacekeeping efforts and spell-out the differences between Russian and American peacekeeping doctrine, but they identify a major US weakness in combined settings: the lack of US peacekeepers' knowledge of the Russian language and culture and how such knowledge would improve the ability of US troops to effectively function in the field with their Russian counterparts within these combined settings. Their paper highlights both the wider potential benefits that can be gained from multinational operations and the further complexity and requirements they generate in order to ensure such broad success.

It is hoped that the issues and lessons highlighted by the authors of both papers will enable US policy makers and military commanders to identify means to more effectively lead or participate in such interventions for as long as the international situation and United States policy dictate a need for military intervention.

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JAMES M. SMITH
Director

US POLICY TOWARDS SECESSION IN THE BALKANS AND EFFECTIVENESS OF *DE FACTO* PARTITION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the decade of the 1990s, as ethnic conflicts obtained greater salience and demonstrated renewed ability to destabilize the international order, successive US administrations fostered cautious multilateral policies. Washington advocated interventions in Bosnia and Kosovo that were designed to end conflict and restore order in the short-run while firmly denying the right to partition the original state. Partition—the creation of one or more new independent states from an existing one—was normatively and practically rejected. Instead, the US and its NATO allies opted for *de facto* partition as the “best of the worst” policy choices.

The *de facto* partitions in Bosnia and Kosovo are short-term military and political expedients involving the use of non-sovereign boundaries to divide states ethnically, geographically and politically. Simultaneously, the regimes imposed by the Dayton Accords in Bosnia and the UN protectorate in Kosovo emphasize the use of political and economic incentives to bridge military and territorial boundaries. The following study examines the two major ongoing civil-military attempts to manage ethnic conflict in the Balkans via *de facto* partition. The analysis focuses on the extent to which policy implementation bolsters the underlying objective—to maintain a multiethnic sovereign state and prevent secession or partition. The study assesses the *de facto* partition regimes in Bosnia and Kosovo in terms of their short-term effectiveness containing conflict and the long-term prospects for state preservation. In each case, the analysis begins with a brief review of the objectives of the intervenors. Subsequent sections focus on the military and political aspects of the intervention, and the extent to which they are reinforcing partition or integration. The conclusion offers a blunt final assessment of international efforts in the Balkans and policy recommendations addressing current shortcomings.

The evidence demonstrates that some progress has been made towards achieving the underlying objective in both cases—to establish multiethnic democracy and prevent secession or partition. *De facto* partition has brought short-term gains to Bosnia and Kosovo. It has proven to be an effective post-conflict mechanism to separate formerly warring parties. The international forces have restored peace to Bosnia and Kosovo. However, progress towards establishing a stable multiethnic state and territory in Bosnia and Kosovo, respectively, has been slowed and is in danger of stalling. The continued presence of war criminals and associated mafias in both states provides a sustained threat to internal security. The criminal networks prevent true freedom of movement of peoples, goods and capital, affecting long-term economic prospects as well. Finally, in Bosnia the lack of a functioning central government leaves the state out of the European integration process and continues to prevent compromise and a power shift from nationalists to more moderate politicians.

The study recommends that the implementers in Bosnia and Kosovo move quickly and assertively to: 1) remove internal security threats, 2) begin to reform the economic system and 3) in Bosnia, rewrite the constitution to strengthen the central government. The author asserts that *de facto* partition cannot become the basis for policy, if civilian and military peace implementers are unwilling to aggressively administer the protectorates that result. Firm international administration is required to implement the political and economic reforms that will bridge the *de facto* partition. Imposing reform upon these ethnically divided societies is the only “shock-therapy” that will allow for relatively quick political change and conditions conducive to a removal of the international forces that enforce the *de facto* partitions.

IMPROVING US-RUSSIAN RELATIONS THROUGH PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The post-Cold War era has seen a rise in the number of international peacekeeping operations undertaken by the world community. While these missions have often consumed the world's attention, the US-Russian relationship still plays a crucial role in world affairs. This paper seeks to answer three main questions:

- 1. Can relations between the US and Russia be improved through combined peacekeeping operations and support for Russian peacekeeping in the near abroad?*
- 2. In what areas can the US most effectively use resources to enhance cooperation in peacekeeping?*
- 3. What actions should the US take to initiate or improve relations in these areas?*

Cooperation in Peacekeeping

The US has several vital and important interests involved in maintaining a cooperative relationship with Russia. While the current relationship is somewhat tense, one of the most promising ways to improve the overall strategic relationship is through cooperation in peacekeeping efforts. These efforts provide an opportunity for higher level political figures to interact and allow the US and Russia to promote their mutual interests.

Assessment of Russian Peacekeeping

To find the areas where the US can most effectively use its resources to enhance cooperation in peacekeeping, this paper assesses: 1) where Russia is most likely to participate, 2) Russian peacekeeping training and equipment, 3) Russian peacekeeping doctrine, 4) a case of participation in an international operation, Bosnia, and 5) a case of involvement in the near abroad with a low level of UN supervision, Abkhazia.

Participation: Russia's economic and political situations limit them to participation in peacekeeping missions in the near abroad, the Balkans, and, to a limited extent, UN operations.

Training and Equipment: The training Russian forces receive for these missions is adequate, but their equipment is outdated and poorly maintained.

Doctrine: Russian peacekeeping doctrine, at least in practice, differs from US doctrine in three areas: 1) a greater propensity to use force, 2) an often-times partial approach to promote Russian interests, and 3) the inclusion of combatants in the peacekeeping force.

Performance in Bosnia: As an example of Russian participation in combined operations with the US under NATO auspices, Bosnia shows that Russian troops perform adequately. The major issues in Russian performance include setting up a mutually agreeable command and control structure, questions of Russian partiality and lack of professionalism, equipment and maintenance problems, and language and cultural barriers.

Performance in Abkhazia: In Abkhazia, Russian forces act under CIS auspices with UN supervision. They perform the minimum task of maintaining stability reasonably well, partly because of their heavy-handed approach. Russian troops have frequently acted with partiality towards the Abkhaz, and have been unable or unwilling to completely fulfill their mandate to provide a secure environment and to facilitate the return of refugees.

The US has an opportunity to improve the overall strategic relationship with Russia by improving cooperation in the Balkans and finding areas to support Russian peacekeeping in the near abroad.

Bosnia

The US should seek to improve cooperation and communication in Bosnia by: increasing the number of LNO's (liaison officers) to the Russian Brigade, including a Russian Representative in PfP command post exercises, and restarting the combined patrolling missions that the Russian and US troops perform. To reduce cultural misunderstandings and break down language

barriers, the US should set aside more time to brief incoming American commanders (down through platoon leaders and NCO's) and develop phrase books on various differences in military culture, terminology, and procedures.

Abkhazia

The US can support Russian peacekeeping in the near abroad by allowing American UN observers more freedom to travel in the conflict region and increasing their interactions with CIS peacekeeping forces. The US should also encourage and support other CIS nations, such as the Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and Georgia, to take a more active role in CIS peacekeeping missions, bolstering the CIS and improving its peacekeeping capabilities and legitimacy.

Overall Recommendations

These recommendations can improve the US-Russian relationship in the context of any type of peacekeeping operation:

- 1) Define each nation's participation in the operational planning of multinational peacekeeping operations by the level or amount of their participation in the operation.
- 2) Restart educational exchanges between US and Russian military personnel.
- 3) Perform combined exercises of staff level officers under the established PfP program.
- 4) Improve Russian language and cultural expertise among US officers.
- 5) Increase cultural training for officers and NCOs assigned to work with Russian units.
- 6) Give more credit to Russia for its peacekeeping operations in recognition of improved performance in desired areas.

