Societal security. Theoretical grounds

The contemporary security is linked more with the security of human communities that with the individual security (safety) which becomes more and more just a part of the security. The standard unity of analysis for the security is the sovereign state, from a territorial point of view. The ideal type is the nation state where the ethnical and cultural borders are identical to the political ones. But this is rather the exception than the rule in the contemporary world (cases of Japan and Denmark). Since nations and states are not coinciding exactly, realism could no longer offer suitable theoretical grounds for security approach so the post-modernism introduces other actors than the states in discussion, such as non-state collectivities.

The security of human collectivities is divided in 5 different sectors: political, economic, military, social, ecological. These fields are not completely separated, but overlapping and interdependent. The political security is referring to the organizational stability of the states, the system of governance and of the ideologies that legitimize them. The societal security capacity of sustaining, in an acceptable trend of evolution, the traditional elements of language, culture, identity, religious and cultural habitudes. So the social-political cohesion of the state become the most important and prominent criteria.

So the concept of societal security did appear in the European school of security in the 80’s, in the context of the debates including a redefinition of security that could face the end of the 21-st century, initiated by COPRI in Copenhagen. The concept is a result of the observation and practices of the
European integration process and reflects the dominant non/military approach to the security on our continent. The societal security is one of the five components and aspects of security and the general approach was accepted by NATO as official definition (Rome 1991) and is still included in the current Strategic Concept (Washington 1999). The most prominent theoreticians of the security define that way are Barry Buzan, Ole Waever, Morten Kelstrup, Pierre Lemaitre (1993-1998).

The basic source of the concept comes from the very definition of the society (Waever 1998) as a human entity created through a process of living together of individual and group association defined by common attributes and expressing common filings - identity, tradition, symbols, values. Societal security is not nation security (political security), nor state security (just a part of it), and is more than individual security (safety). Societal security is linked to identity, community, morality and common values.

The principal threats to societal security are:

- The process of creation of a “nation state” community – at least at a level of components – that could lead to the suppression/assimilation/discrimination of the minorities linked to the will of homogenization of some sub-state identity (Horizontal competition: changes of identity due to outside influences)
- Temptation of suppressing the sub-state identity, once an assume “state identity” is impose through administrative means to the local communities, with no respect to their specifics (Vertical competition-altering the identity by imposing/creating a new identity of an integrative process or a secessionist/separatist/regionalist one)
- Sudden change of the ethnical, religious and minority composition of the population and the altering by mass illegal/legal migration, refugees, IDP’s process, as well as the lack of coherent return of IDP/refugees and re-integration in the original communities. Or differences in demographic evolution and process of ethnical stabilization and integration of the minority at the local level.

Diversity, multiculturalism and societal cohesion

Diversity is an unanimously accepted value of the modern societies, where the contribution of the particularities of the national minorities, of the
culture, art, traditional knowledge, brings an additional value to the titular national of a state. The international law managed even to quantify and legislate the special rights of the minorities and the ways of protecting the diversity and multiculturalism, without affecting the societal cohesion and the identity of a population of a state internationally recognized.

Within this context, we have introduced the two concepts that we use during the entire paper: multiculturalism and societal cohesion.

**Multiculturalism** is the **harmonious coexistence** of several cultures tolerating themselves, **mutually inter-helping themselves to promote new values** and use the diversity as a value **enriching the society** and determining the respect towards one another, within the day by day relations.

**The societal cohesion** is the other face of reality and existence of the communities and represents the sum of **values, norms, actions, behaviors determining the confluence, coexistence and unity vector** of society.

None of the two concepts are, practically and in the day by day life, indissolubly connected to the contemporary societies, they are features acquired in time, based on the experience of coexistence, cooperation and collaboration of the elements of a community, the result of the contemporary civilization and of the **aware acceptance** by everybody, of the **general coexistence rules** and of the **other’s liberties**. They are the results in time through **actions and policies of cohesion** and in the same time, of **defense of the rights and values of the multicultural diversity** of the society’s composition.

**The philosophy of differences, of the enemy and the cohesion principle**

There is a big difference of approach between the **philosophy of differences** revealed before – accepting the **added value** and the enrichment of the society by the very existence of the minorities or other ethnical well represented parts and, on the opposite, the philosophy of the enemy, where every ethnical different person in identify as an enemy or at least a kind of competitor, where the ethnicity is playing the leading role in the society.

Coming back to the comparative study of US Institute for Peace – “minorities at risk”, it outlines that the **increase of the activism and of the claims of the minorities are directly proportional with the decrease of the democratic indicators**, fact that implicitly leads to the dramatic increase of the discrimination degree and to the increase of the probability and risks regarding
conflicts. Thus, the study divides the states in four big categories, old democracies, new democracies, countries in transition and autocracies.

The lack of access to the political decision, the centralization or re-centralization of the state power, the inequality of chances and inequality of the access to opportunities, directing of the opportunities on political criteria – in the administrative, economic fields of the professional promotion – are just as enough reasons to crate/maintain/escalate within the inter-ethnic conflicts. The indicators to be observed are the indicators of the stage of democracy, the increase of the division degree of society and the directing towards a pattern with a guided democracy, trends of autocratic formula, the appearance of the rule of law, indoctrinating and politicizing of the society through the adoption of a “state doctrine”, specially an ethnic one.

The future and the chance of Bosnia: European Integration

The future of Bosnian state is directly linked to the political-societal cohesion. This means that a step forward is needed from the “contractual based state” to the substantiation of the cohesion that should stand at the bases of the nation building project and common identity and the coherence of the future cultural nation state.

In the particular case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as criticized as it was, the technical solution to accommodate three major ethnicity that formed the Bosnian state, the increase of attributes at the level of the components – Republika Srpska and the Bosnian-Herzegovina Federation – the formation of the trilateral presidency – even if it was an innovation, were good solutions to build confidence, to create points of convergence and develop a space where those ethncal parts that once fight each-other leave together.

There is a moment of maturity of this tolerance and co-existence where a step forward is needed in terms of reaching a societal cohesion. This moment is offer by a normal level of mutual trust, of accepting the future of the state as a tri-ethnic one, seeing the advantages of the co-existence together more interesting than the fight or the future in another posture, especially a separatist one, and forgetting the ethnical principle as a dominant one. This moment should be prepare by a full range of strategies of societal cohesion that gives the sense of nation building.
If we reach the point where the ethnical mark of each other public servant, high dignitary or political representative is no longer relevant for an administrative or general job, we have won. The moment will be shown by the dominance of the political life by purely ideological parties – liberal, Christian democrat, social-democrats, ecologists and others – and the fall at less that 10% of the nationalist parties. The clear perspective of European Integration and the open door policy is the only attractive policy that could offer a chance for the societal cohesion in the foreseeable future in Bosnia Herzegovina. On the contrary, the precedent of Ahtisaari solution in Kosovo combine with the lack of common project for Bosnia could make a shock that could lead to direct and quick separatism and a reshape of the region in the next 10 years.

Characteristics & potential threats:

Let me end my presentation by offering you a brief presentation of the developments that should be under observation and some possible solutions:

1. Ethnical conflict
   – how deep the solution
   – reconciliation
   – accepting the enemy

Philosophy of the common project – Stability Pact – European Integration
Democratic paradigm: compatibility at the border - ENP.

2. Heterogeneous political construction.
3. Weak entities/ inviting the influence of external actors, strongest neighbors, interested to avoid the consolidation of the new state or the control of a rival.
4. Historical ambitions
5. Geopolitical target – it exist at the Adriatic Sea, control of the straight connection between Constanta-Trieste (Caspian-Caucasian resources and Europe).
6. Ethnical mosaic, borders between entities arbitrary established, respecting mainly the ethnic map.
7. Remaining from yugoslave identity, temptations of the former dominant ethnicity, the so-call colonist syndrome, the lost of privileges.
8. Threat of territorial secession.
9. Multiple rivalry - example 19-th century: former competition between Turkey (Ottoman Empire), Austria, Hungary (Austro-Hungarian Empire) and Russia. Indirect participants Germany (fearing Russia), France (opposing Austro/Hungary) and Great Britain (ready to accept a dominance of a weak Ottoman Empire). Lessons learned: a clear common project, no hidden agendas, clear positions – balance between influences.
10. Now Croatia, Serbia direct influence, with secondary interests from Germany, Austria and Vatican(Croatia), Russia(Serbia), Saudi Arabia, Iran and Turkey - Islamic identity. US involvement, EU integrative role, Kosovo precedent (influence for future secessionism, SIRPSKA Republic. The basic competition for access and influence.
11. Solutions: no dominance, no exclusion; avoiding objectives and representation link to ethnicity, creation of a civic nation, societal cohesion.

Annex
Current characteristics of ethnicity in BH

When elaborating the present paper, we have used the experience of US Institute for Peace within the project “Minorities at risk”, a comparative study for a number of 274 cases of minorities of any kind, in the world, conflicts implying ethnical, linguistic, religious minorities, identity conflicts, with the evolution from the last 17 years of this kind of conflicts and the best practices for their settlement.

1. General situation

The situation in Bosnia is improving, yet still quite volatile. Bosnia has a long history of ethnic tensions, and its unique structure creates challenges for its constituent minority groups. The 1995 Dayton Accords set up two entities combining to create one federal Bosnian government. The two entities, the Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina frequently clash over issues such as refugee return and war criminal prosecution. The Republika Srpska (RS) is predominately Serb and in this region Croats and Bosniaks experience significant oppression. The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina is predominately Croat and Muslim Bosniak. In this region, Serbs experience significant discrimination. However, since most Serbs live in the RS
and most Muslims and Croats in the Federation, each minority group as a whole experiences low levels of discrimination.

The federal structure has become more efficient in recent years, but the fundamental differences of the minority groups and ethnic tensions remain. Further complicating the situation in Bosnia is the fact that all three ethnic groups have been in the region for so long that each has a certain historical claim to the land.

Rebellion is unlikely at this time because ethnic groups are relatively satisfied with their limited regional autonomy. Also, the international presence and attention limit opportunities for an armed rebellion. Protests are likely to continue, especially by Bosniaks and Croats in the RS and Serbs in the Federation. The large support for nationalist parties is evidence of the underlying ethnic tensions in the region.

Reports point to problems of mutual accommodation of Bosnian ethnic groups and the uneasy process of building a multi-ethnic democracy. The building of multiethnic democratic institutions has been a problem for both halves of Bosnia, but is more serious in the Muslim-Croat federation.

Bosnian inhabitants have concerns regarding the protection of their property and land, as well as issues surrounding returning refugees. Many families moved into homes that were deserted, only to find now that the original owner has come back, and vice versa. This issue is actually of concern for all three Bosnian ethnic groups, as refugees of all groups have returned only to find new residents in their homes. The government has actually been criticized by all ethnic groups in Bosnia for not being able to protect the property of returning refugees.

A special problem with the building of new democratic institutions is the status of two Bosnian cities – Brcko in the Serb republic and Mostar in the Muslim-Croat federation. Both of these cities have special importance for the two parts of post-Dayton Bosnia.

2. Serbs in Bosnia
The Serb population has been in the region of Serbia/Bosnia for hundreds of years. Within Bosnia, they are concentrated in a region close to the Serbian border, but many Serbs were forced from their homes during the civil war and are only now beginning to return. The Serbs of Bosnia share many of the beliefs of the Serbs in other regions of the former Yugoslavia, and Serbs in both Bosnia and these regions are employed across the border. Beyond the use of the Serbian language, the Serbs follow the Orthodox Christian religion, rather than Catholicism or Islam.

Currently, the Bosnian Serb population is not experiencing any ecological or demographic disadvantages beyond the large number of Serb refugees who are beginning to return to the region from Yugoslavia and elsewhere now that the fighting has ceased in Bosnia. The multi-person presidency allows each ethnic group to elect one of their members to this office, which ensures that no single ethnic group possesses more political power than the other two in this office. Within the geographic areas where they comprise a majority of the population, it is highly unlikely that they face any form of discrimination, but due to the tensions that exist between the three groups, the possibility of discrimination against Bosnian Serbs in non-Serb areas is high.

While many Bosnian Serbs have been subject to arrest recently, these arrests are not a result of their ethnic background. Rather, they have been incarcerated because of their actions during the civil war. Many Bosnian Serbs have been charged with war crimes. The Serbs in Bosnia have been involved in conflicts both with other ethnic groups and with themselves since the cease fire was signed in 1995. Intra-group conflict has been marked by hardliner assassinations of Serbs considered either not sufficiently committed to the Serb cause or too willing to compromise.

Most Bosnian Serbs advocate greater political autonomy within Bosnia rather than outright secession. Another important issue for the Serbs is the protection of their religion, culture and language, which serves as a rallying cry for Serbs despite the fact that these institutions are not currently in any danger. The Serbs also desire an end to the civil war crimes tribunals, which they claim are biased against Serbs.

The Serbs began to protest what was happening in Bosnia in the early 1990s as they became aware that Yugoslavia was breaking apart. Protests resumed after the civil war and have continued to this day over issues such as wages and the rights of both returning refugees and Serbs who are being
evicted from their homes as the country is restructured. Some militant activity has been reported as late as 1999, when there was a minor outbreak of violence between Serbs and the Bosnian army. No rebellious activity was reported from 2000-2003.

3. Croats in Bosnia

Croats in Bosnia have a low risk of rebellion, yet the possibility of protests remains high. The more likely scenario is a continuation of the protests that were seen from 1999-2003. Strong support for nationalistic Croat parties also ensures the continuation of protests for the foreseeable future.

The Croats have the smallest population of the three at close to 22%. The Croats predominantly speak Croatian, which is considered to be its own language despite its similarity to Serbian. The Croats are primarily Catholic Christian, compared to the Orthodox Serbs and the Muslims. The Bosnian Croats are located predominantly near the Bosnia/Croatia border but many have scattered across Bosnia and migrated to Croatia during the civil war and its aftermath. Bosnian Croats were both the recipients and perpetrators of atrocities during the Bosnian civil war.

While the Croats in Bosnia do not currently face any ecological or demographic disadvantages, the "brain drain" has become an issue for Bosnian Croats. Many of the brightest and youngest Bosnian Croats are leaving Bosnia for Croatia and elsewhere.

The Bosnian Croats also face no economic discrimination in the region where they are a majority. In non-Croat majority areas, social discrimination against Croats does occur. The government engages in no formal oppression of Croats, but societal discrimination causes problems. The Bosnian Croats appear to have avoided massive conflicts with either the Muslims or Serbs in recent years, except for several incidents in the late 1990s of extremist Bosnian Croats carrying out attacks on the Army of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Only a small number of Bosnian Croats advocate a complete break from Bosnia, allowing the area to join Croatia. Others have called for greater autonomy in the Croatian region. As a sign of the decreasing support for outright secession, the Croat wing of the Bosnian parliament has indefinitely postponed a formal call to join Croatia.
4. Muslims in Bosnia

Muslims in Bosnia have a low risk of rebellion, yet the possibility of protests remains high. The more likely scenario is a continuation of the verbal opposition and political resistance that were seen from 1999 to 2003. There are issues that Muslims feel strongly about, and the failing Bosnian economy and refugee problems have not been solved. While the equality of the three ethnic groups has been established institutionally, the group which is most victimized appears to be the Bosnian Muslims. As long as this is the case, the chances of Muslim protest will remain high.

The Muslim population was severely affected by the civil war in Bosnia. Muslims faced attacks by both Serbs and Croats at different points in the war. The Bosnian Muslims follow a different faith than the Croats and Serbs. The majority of the Muslim population is found in the urban centers of Bosnia, though Muslims are now spread throughout the rest of the country as well.

Bosnian Muslims do not currently face any political discrimination, at least from the highest levels of the government. In the Croat- and Serb-controlled areas of Bosnia this may not wholly be the case, but in the country en bloc there is little discrimination. The same is true for cultural and economic disadvantages as the Muslims are protected by their representative in the office of the President. There are no reports of current overt government repression against the Bosnian Muslims. The group does continue to clash with the other ethnic groups in Bosnia, and recently these clashes have mainly been with Serbs. Reports of violence at protests have occurred. For example, a Muslim threw a bomb during a Serb protest in 1998 and in 2001 a crowd of 2,000-5,000 Serbs attacked Muslims at a groundbreaking ceremony for reconstruction of a mosque.

The main concerns are related to improvement of the economic standing of Bosnian Muslims. The long civil war destroyed the Bosnian economy, and Muslims feel that they have suffered the most economically. There are still many outstanding issues over the rights of returning refugees, which the Muslims demand to be solved. Bosnian Muslims are still concerned with violence carried out against them by Serbs and, at times, Croats.

Muslims in Bosnia have historically been quite reluctant to engage in anti-state protests. The communist regime that controlled Yugoslavia
prevented most actions of this sort from occurring. Muslims first began to protest in the early 1990s as Yugoslavia was falling apart. More recently, larger demonstrations have been seen as Muslims began to express their frustration with the refugee problems, the poor economy, and low wages, but protest activity has been restricted to scattered symbolic resistance and political organizing from 2001-2003.

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