‘The Contact Group on Bosnia-Hercegovina and Kosovo:

The Institution and its Mediation Role’

Marit Moe

School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University College London, University of London

MPhil

Abstract

This thesis examines the Contact Group as an institution, and its role in the Bosnian and Kosovo conflicts in the 1990s. The thesis aims to explain what the Contact Group is, how it was composed and how it worked. Its roles in Bosnia-Hercegovina and Kosovo are compared throughout.

The Contact Group's work and development are examined in the light of Neo-Liberalism and Neo-Realism, and the thesis sets out to discuss one of the core debates between the two schools: do institutions matter, or are they simply a reflection of power distribution in the world?

The Contact Group went through significant changes from its creation in 1994 to the end of its engagement in the Kosovo conflict in 1999. I have divided the Contact Group's life into five phases, determined by significant changes in its structure and work. Phase one is the consolidation phase where the Contact Group works to find a common ground and working strategy acceptable to all the members. Phase two deals with the Contact Group's work in the preparation for, and during, the Dayton negotiations in Dayton, Ohio, October-November 1995. Phase three is the inter-war period where the Contact Group expands its membership and redefines its purpose. Phase four is the most complicated phase, where the Contact Group divides its attention between Bosnia and the troubles occurring in Kosovo. It is a defining phase that eventually determines the Contact Group's role because its legitimacy and flexibility is finally optimised. Phase five concerns the period from the failure of talks at Rambouillet, France, to the present, and does therefore largely fall outside the scope of the thesis. However, the epilogue will show the current state of events, and which direction the fifth phase is likely to take.

The Contact Group is a very important diplomatic tool, and has played a significant role in the two conflicts. Very little research has been done on the Contact Group, and this is a contribution to put that right.

List of Contents:

Acknowledgments……p. 6

List of Acronyms and Terms……...p. 7

Introduction: The Purpose of this thesis -an introduction……...p. 8

Chapter One: The Conflicts in Bosnia-Hercegovina and Kosovo: Realist and Liberal Theories……p. 11
1.0.0 Liberalism and Realism……p. 11
1.1.0 Realist versus liberal thought……p. 12
1.1.1 The classical theories: Realism……p. 12
1.1.2 Classical Liberalism……..p. 14
1.1.3 'Neo-Realism' and 'Neo-Liberalism'……p. 17
1.2.0 Defining an international institution. ……..... p. 21
1.2.1 Mediation through international institutions…….....p. 22
1.2.2 Gains, morality and institutions...……..... ..... p. 23
1.2.3 The importance of institutions.....……..... p. 25
1.2.4 The choice of strategy. Liberalism or Realism? ……...p. 28
1.3.0 The Contact Group as an international institution……..... p. 30
1.4.0 Conclusion……p. 31
1.4.1 Limited sources on the Contact Group……..p. 32

Chapter Two: The Establishment of the Contact Group……....p. 36
2.0.0 April 1994: why a new approach to the peace efforts was necessary.....p. 36
2.1.0 The five phases of the Contact Group……....……..….p. 37
2.1.1 The failure of international institutions……p. 39
2.1.1.1 The EC……....p. 42
2.1.1.2 NATO……p. 43
2.1.1.3 The UN……...p. 44
2.1.1.4 The CSCE and the ICFY……p. 46
2.1.2 Too many roles. Governments on both sides of the table……p. 47
2.2.0 Change of gear, enter the Contact Group……..p. 50
2.2.1 Preludes to the Contact Group on Bosnia and its legacy……p. 53
2.2.2 Composition of the Group…….....p. 54
2.2.3 Working as an institution……...p. 57

Chapter Three: From the Contact Group Peace Plan to the Dayton Negotiations…..... p. 60
3.0.0 Introduction to chapter.....……p. 60
3.0.1 Background to a new peace plan…….p. 60
3.1.0 The strategy of the Contact Group……p. 62
3.1.1 Reactions to the Contact Group's approach……..p. 63
3.2.0 The trouble spots……...p. 66
3.3.0 The Contact Group problem……. p. 70
3.4.0 The death of the Contact Group plan……p. 74

3.4.1 The second phase..... p. 76
3.5.0 The road to Dayton……... p. 80
3.5.1 The isolation of the Bosnian Serbs pays off……. p. 81
3.5.2 Autumn 1995:the Contact Group's role, and new actors invited to contribute p. 83
3.6.0 Negotiations at Dayton……. p. 85

Chapter Four: Achievements in Bosnia and the Local Contact Group……. p. 93
4.0.0 After Dayton, new structure, new tasks……. p. 93
4.0.1 New institutions in Bosnia and the Contact Group's continued role.....p. 93
4.1.0 The legacy of the Contact Group.....…….. p. 99
4.2.0 The Local Contact Group……. p. 102
4.2.1 The LCG's role in Bosnia.....……p. 103
4.2.2 The LCG's influence on local politics……..p. 104
4.2.3 Russian exit from the LCG……... p. 106
4.3.0 The Quint…….. p. 108
4.4.0 Efficiency versus democracy, and the international community's progress….p. 110

Chapter Five: The Contact Group in Kosovo……... p. 113
5.0.0 Introduction to chapter…….....p. 113
5.1.0 The political radicalisation of the Kosovo Albanians post-Dayton…….. p. 114
5.1.1 The first international attempt at negotiations on Kosovo..…….....p. 117
5.1.2 The Kosovo Albanians' political claims……...p. 117
5.1.3 1997: a new attempt from the international community……... p. 119
5.2.0 Phase four: changes in the Contact Group……....p. 120
5.2.1 Internal developments and the Contact Group's legitimacy problem……...p. 120
5.2.2 The Contact Group's relations with other international institutions…….. p. 122
5.2.3 The 1998 mediation effort…… p. 125
5.2.4 The Contact Group and the problems caused by national interests…….....p. 127
5.2.4.1 Russia…….p. 127
5.2.4.2 The USA……... p. 130
5.2.4.3 The Contact Group's EU members……p. 131
5.3.0 The diplomatic process……. p. 133
5.3.1 The debate on the use of force…….. p. 136
5.4.0 The Rambouillet process, 6-23 February 1999…….p. 138
5.4.1 The Implementation Annex and why success at Rambouillet was unlikely….p. 148
5.4.2 New talks in Paris..... p. 155
5.5.0 The Contact Group leaves the stage.....……..p. 156
5.5.1 The Quint and the G8 enter the scene..…….p. 157
5.6.0 The motives of the actors, Liberalism or Realism?…….. p. 159

Conclusion..…….. p. 162

Epilogue: The Contact Group's fifth phase.....….....p. 167

Bibliography: Bibliography of Primary Sources……..p. 169

Bibliography of Secondary Sources…… p. 181

List of maps: 'The Contact Group map with proposed borders July 1994'..... p. 66
'Bosnia and Herzegovina under the Dayton Peace Agreement and front lines at the end of 1995'.....p. 90

List of tables: 'The five phases of the Contact Group'…….p. 37
'The work of the LCG'…….. p. 103

List of Model: 'Power Structure'……. p. 41

Acknowledgements

I always knew it was going to be hard writing this thesis. It will always be difficult to carry out a task of this proportion. In addition, I chose a complicated and constantly changing subject, and I am writing in a language that is not my mother tongue. But, as the cliché goes, I never knew it would be this hard. I would like to thank a number of people, not only for their input and advice, but also for supporting me through my illness and for continuing to have faith in me.

First of all, a big thank you to my supervisors, Peter Siani-Davies and Pete Duncan. Thank you for all your good advice and for not giving up on me. Second, I am grateful to Trond Botnen for providing the inspiration behind the subject of this thesis. I am indebted to those people who allowed me to interview them, Andrei Dirgin, Graham Hand, Paul Johnston, Dame Pauline Neville-Jones, Christian Pauls, Hans Jochen Peters, Velia De Pirro, Thorvald Stoltenberg, and those who would rather not be named. Without them, there could have been no thesis. In addition, I wish to make mention of Oliver Fontan at the French embassy to Bosnia-Hercegovina, Christopher Bird at the OHR in Sarajevo and Lord Owen who all kindly provided me with important material. I was also greatly helped by the British Council who awarded me a Chevening Scholarship for the academic year 1999-2000.

A sincere thank you also to Jim Headley, who has supported and inspired me greatly over the last few years. I am further very grateful to Susan Pryce for reading and editing the style of my language. Finally, I would like to thank my parents and my partner, Nick, for all their help throughout, and especially during the difficult period. Without you, I would never have been able to complete my thesis.

List of Acronyms and Terms

ACTORD	- Activation Order
BiH	- Bosnia and Hercegovina
CFSP	- Common Foreign and Security Policy, The EU's
COREU	- Official telegrams between EC/ EU capitals
CSCE	- Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe
EC	- European Community
EU	- The European Union
FRG	- The Federal Republic of Germany
FRY	- Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
GATT	- General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
G7(8)	- The Group of Seven (Russia sometimes participate, hence eight)
ICFY	- International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia
ICTY	- International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia
IFOR	- Implementation Force
IMF	- International Monetary Fund
IPTF	- International Police Task Force
KFOR	- Kosovo Force
KLA	- Kosovo Liberation Army
KVM	- Kosovo Verification Mission
LCG	- Local Contact Group
LDK	- League for Democratic Kosovo
NAC	- North Atlantic Council
NATO	- North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
OIC	- Organization of the Islamic Conference
OHR	- Office of the High Representative
OSCE	- Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PIC	- Peace Implementation Council
QSP	- Quick Start Package
SFOR	- Stabilisation Force
UN	- United Nations
UNPROFOR	- United Nations Protection Force
UNSC	- United Nations Security Council
VOPP	- Vance-Owen Peace Plan
WEU	- Western European Union
WTO	-World Trade Organisation
Z4	-Zagreb Four

'The Contact Group on Bosnia-Hercegovina and Kosovo: The Institution and its Mediation Role'

By Marit Moe

The purpose of this thesis -an introduction

This thesis will attempt to explore the role of the Contact Group on Bosnia and Kosovo, and the challenges it faced in former Yugoslavia in the 1990s. In order to make a useful analysis it will be necessary to evaluate relations between the Contact Group and other actors, namely, the Contact Group-countries (as nation-states), local actors, and other institutions such as the United Nations (UN), the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), the International Conference on Former Yugoslavia (ICFY) and the European Union (EU). The aim of this thesis is to understand how the Contact Group worked and to demonstrate how it was essential to the peace processes, and how hostilities would perhaps not have ended without its efforts.

The thesis will demonstrate that international institutions played a significant role in the conflicts in Bosnia and Kosovo. However, it will be argued that the institutions are a reflection of the world's power structure and their decisions are strongly influenced by the most powerful member states, notably the US and its close allies, at the expense of other countries. An international institution with an uneven power balance will find its ability to be an independent actor in international relations very limited.

The two international relations theories, Liberalism and Realism, are concerned with the role of international institutions in world politics. The Contact Group on Bosnia and Kosovo is a good illustration of how these theories are reflected in the international community's work.[1] In light of Liberalism and Realism's view of institutions, it will be argued that the Contact Group is a new international institution that has come to stay. Its structural and political changes that appeared over time and, its work in the Bosnia and Kosovo conflicts will be analysed using the two theories as the framework. Theories of international relations are most useful when analysing the

broad picture, or a single event in a conflict. However, the thesis will show that, as soon as the whole context with all the complicating factors has to be considered, neither Realism nor Liberalism is able to offer adequate explanation of why the actors chose to act in the way they did. Together, however, the two theories constitute a useful tool for analysis and it will be argued that the theories overlap.

In academic literature, where the role of the international community is discussed, there sometimes seems to be a lack of understanding of the nature of politics. The criticism made in the case of Bosnia is similar to the arguments raised against NATO's involvement in the Kosovo crisis. The critics claimed that attempts made by the international community were either going too far or not far enough.[2] The point is not that they are wrong, but what the critics frequently fail to take into account is the process of policymaking in liberal democracies; agreements do usually have to be a compromise. Furthermore, any decision made will have to be implemented through an institution with an acceptable amount of legitimacy. Governments, or institutions composed of governments, cannot easily go further than public support will allow. This is why the Contact Group could only act as long as it had its own governments and the majority of the international community on its side. Arguably, this can be seen as a convenient excuse for the politicians to avoid using stronger measures, but the truth is not so simple. It was extremely important for the external actors in Bosnia to keep all the Contact Group countries on board, but a host of other political concerns are at play. Decisions are made formally as well as informally in 'the corridors of power'. Decisions are made and ignored, and egos are built and broken. 'It is, above all, a story of people -public servants- working against great odds to do what they believe is the right thing.'[3] The complicated decision making process is a weakness of the democratic society and a major obstacle to the creation of a coherent international policy to crises such as that in Bosnia and Kosovo.

---

[1] The term 'the International Community' is commonly used to refer to the interrelation between states (mostly western) and international institutions. The political output of the interrelation often results in a set of 'commonly agreed' policies, morals and strategies to be implemented in world political affairs.
[2] See for example the recent contribution from Cushman, T., Mestrovic, S. *This Time We Knew: Western Responses to Genocide in Bosnia*, New York, London, 1996 , Ramet, S.P. 'Western "Peace-Making" in the Balkans: A Sceptic's View'*, Seattle Times*, 17 September 1995, Rieff, D. *Slaughter House Bosnia. Failure of the West*, London, 1995, Simms, B. *Unfinest Hour: Britain and the Destruction of Bosnia*, London, New York, 2001
[3] Daalder, I.H. *Getting to Dayton. The Making of America's Bosnia Policy*, Washington D.C. 2000, p. 3

The process of policy making is no excuse for the international community's weak actions in Bosnia or Kosovo, but it is a factor that explains why achieving a good policy is so difficult. The first step towards dealing with the problem would be for the critics to recognize how the political world works, enabling a more constructive debate which, hopefully, will be of more help in the future. In the eyes of the politicians, the work of the international institutions was difficult, for sure, but ultimately a success. Peace was achieved, and cooperation improved greatly. This thesis will attempt to find a balance between the worlds of the outside observers and the politicians.