

# **The role of identity in post-conflict, multiethnic state-building: the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Dayton Accord**

**Captain Patrick J. O'Halloran,  
12<sup>e</sup> Régiment Blindé du Canada**

## **Introduction**

Despite an enormous effort on the part of the international community, ethnic identity continues to undermine the building of the Western nation-state model in Bosnia-Herzegovina. This paper posits that the conventional western paradigm for state-building must be reconsidered in view of the implications of the ideational and structural dynamics of informal and formal institutions inherent in ethnonationalist conflicts. My theoretical objective is to understand how the cognitive factor of group ideas and beliefs about national identity perpetuated in the formal and informal social institutions of ethnonationalism influences the building of the administrative and political structures of a new state created in an environment of post-ethnonationalist war. I inquire into the question as to whether an ideational transformation - a recreation of identity - is required for successful multi-ethnic, liberal democratic state-building or whether ideational accommodation supported by rational interests is sufficient.

My empirical project is a case study of the Dayton Accord and the building of the state of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Bosnia remains a relevant issue for myriad reasons. One such reason was aptly stated by the ex-High Representative for the civilian implementation of the General Framework Agreement for Peace (GFAP) in Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH): "Bosnia is the litmus test of our ability as human beings to live together despite all the cultural, ethnic, and religious lines that history has drawn across our lands and through our societies." A second reason is that Dayton is also a litmus test of the Western governments' and the international community's ability to resolve ethnic conflict, and state secession issues based on national self-determination.

## **The Current Paradigm**

The current state-building formula – the rational Western paradigm - is incomplete and must be reviewed. I call it the rational paradigm as it assumes that the modification of social structures combined with material incentives is a sufficient formula for state-building and that the modification of ideas is either not pertinent or not our responsibility. This is not so for a variety of reasons, namely:

Ethnic conflict is as much about whom people are as it is about what people want; ideas such as identity and interests are inseparable.

Ethnic ideational conflict prevents the setting up of state structures because implementation depends on groups acting in good faith and co-operating.

Democracy is flawed: "democratization unleashes powerful incentives for mobilizing along ethnic lines ..." because "...enfranchisement means popular empowerment." Donald Horowitz claims that party composition and voting behaviour are ethnically biased in ethnically divided

societies. The erroneous assumption of the democratic system is, therefore, "that voters are not irrevocably committed to a particular party: votes (or, at least, some proportion of votes) will shift, and an electoral swing will result in a change of government." In short, democracy erroneously assumes the possibility of "shifting majorities."

In addition, democracy without liberal constitutionalism promotes power accumulation as it is premised on majoritarian principles that presently reinforce nationalist social structures in multiethnic states. However, liberal constitutionalism itself requires a government willing and materially capable of liberalizing society, of limiting its own powers and of implementing a constitution which ensures civil, economic and religious liberties which are fundamental to human autonomy, dignity and identity.

Federalism is flawed: federalism does not guarantee ethnic accord because ethnonationalism is pararegional and because identity groups have contradicting conceptions of national homeland.

## **Theory**

State-building is about society-building. It is as much about ideas as it is about political structures. For a state to constitute itself as a political community – as a society - it must conceptually and structurally transcend the various nations that it comprises. This requires the formation of a group civic or state identity that transcends the particularistic ethnic or national group identities. I am not suggesting a supranational (ethnic) identity that erases history, as was tried numerous times in Yugoslavia by its rulers from the Austro-Hungarian Empire to Tito's communist administration, but an inclusive civic identity based on liberal constitutionalism within a plural-ethnic state.

In theories of psychology and sociology we learn why identity is so compelling to actors, why it is essential both to the individual and the group. It is a human need. In sociology, Marxist theory and structuration theory we learn how it is constructed, or where it comes from. One way is through social interaction or practice. Finally, historical materialism and social historical primordialism inform us that the salience of identity depends on historic social conditions – political, economic and those related to security. Primordial cultural ties and national identity cannot be erased, only weakened and diluted by co-operative practice within equitable social arrangements. Redefining national identity means redefining inter-identity group interests, ideas and relations.

The theoretical framework I have chosen for my study is known as the reflective or neo-institutionalist approach of political science which is informed by the social theories that I have just mentioned. Identity is understood as an idea defined by both formal and informal institutions; ideas are embedded in institutions. Institutions are defined as enduring rules, norms and patterns of behaviour that shape and constrain social behaviour and that determine the ideas (including identity), interests and social roles of a particular identity group. Institutions may be formal or informal. An example may be drawn from Catholicism: the Church and its hierarchy are its formal institutions whereas concepts such as forgiveness, resurrection, creation, and belief in one God are informal. (See chart at annex)

My study examines the effect identity has on the state- and society-building process via its dynamics within the institutions of ethnonationalism. Based on a definition of religion by Pedro Ramet, I define nationalism as an interrelated set of assumptions and beliefs about the nature of the nation-state which are actively propagated by a formal institution or organized identity group which locates the legitimacy of those assumptions, and of certain behavioural imperatives derived from them, in collective interpretations of historical "facts" and cultural primacy. Ethnonationalism is a form of nationalism in which the referent object of national identity is the ethnic group. It comprises related formal and informal institutions characterized by exclusive ethnocentric behaviour. All nationalism in Eastern Europe is ethnonationalism.

The institutions of ethnonationalism hinder and may even prevent the interethnic cooperation necessary for successful post-conflict state-building because it inhibits the society-building process which is fundamental to the Western nation-state. The "nation" in the West European and modern sense is "one organic and national personality." The Western nation-state, therefore, is understood as an entity in which national identity, state territory and political structures coincide.

Therefore, society-building implies modifying conceptualizations of identity, which requires an institutional transformation. This means replacing the institutions of ethnonationalism as a society-organizing template with those associated with civic nationalism. It implies a number of macro social changes:

Building a civic identity based on liberalism, democracy and constitutionalism.

Making the idea of the nation inclusive or at least not exclusive (creating multiple collective identities) in order to permit cooperation and social/cultural pluralism.

Making the idea of the state, the idea driving the choice of political structures that orient and organize interests, one based on a liberal democratic constitutional order.

Transcending the dialectic between civic and national identity or between civic ties and historic primordialism.

## **Transformation**

Institutions are created and recreated by social practice, or behaviour, which is the key to institutional transformation. Practising structures means practising ideas. However the problem is to convince identity groups to practice structures if their ideas conflict or are incompatible with those ideas embedded in the new structures. In my case study, this means trying to convince Serbs, Croats and Muslims to practice structures requiring a civic identity that contradicts their national identities and all that they represent. In effect, practice may not be carried out at all – groups refusing to cooperate in a peace plan – or may be just nominal practice (versus a reflective practice whereby ideas are internalized). In the latter case, once third party intervention ceases, practice is discontinued.

In sum, behaviour may be changed by altering the structures or milieu in which practice is exercised (implicit in the rational Western approach), and by addressing shared ideas such as identity directly.

My approach to post-conflict multiethnic state-building that integrates considerations on the impact of identity, identifies two principle objectives to change practice in order to facilitate the institutional transformation required to move from ethnonationalism to civic nationalism: the material or structural objective, and the ideational objective.

The **structural / material objective** relates to formal institutions. It advocates a state-building process designed to develop political structures that facilitate and permit informal institutional transformation, and that reduce the recourse to primordial identity groups. It means changing the environment in which ethnocentric behaviour and identity construction is practised, specifically:

Resolving the material social circumstances that strengthen politics of identity and primordial ties and that contribute to interethnic rivalry: comparative social and economic status, historical economic and political grievances, and the relative distribution of wealth.

Creating structures/organizations and public policy that respond to the fundamental social causes of the conflict (collapse of Communism, economic crisis, regionalization, democratization).

Creating a non-discriminatory and equitable power-sharing and territorial arrangement.

Resolving physical security concerns.

Developing a government and an electoral system that promotes inter-ethnic voting in a multiparty system.

Addressing the national question of homeland (territorial interests) and political autonomy.

Instituting the principles of liberalism (including democracy as popular sovereignty and constitutionalism as guaranteed individual and group rights).

The **ideal national objective** relates to informal institutions. It refers to the creation of an inclusive civic identity that transcends exclusive ethnonationalist ones. It refers to reconciling state identity with national identity. Specifically, it means:

Changing the practice of reproducing ethnocentric behaviour and identity construction (the social routine of identity formation) that:

defines and legitimizes national inclusions and exclusions (us/them)

promotes intense essentializations

promotes semantics of difference

promotes status differentiation

associates a moral duty with ethnic affiliation

encourages discriminating organizational procedures, authority structures, and ideologies

encourages cultural assimilation, cultural differentiation (stay or become different), and alloplastic activities (the denial or imposing of distinctive character traits).

Addressing those ideational factors contributing to interethnic rivalry: interpretation of the historical record and collective grievances, intergroup salience, and the definition of the identity group's "homeland".

Addressing simultaneously these two objectives implies treating the dialectic of ideas and interests. Ethnonationalism depends on socially relevant interests, satisfying or altering those interests removes the basis for ethnonationalism. Conversely, interests must relate to and are justified by ideas, so changing ideas makes space to change interests.

The targets of structural change are the constitution (which defines all state structures) and the economy, with the political community the human target group for initiating practice. Convincing identity groups to practice new structures is the essence of the peace implementation process. The targets of ideational change are schools, media (radio, TV, newspaper, Internet), the Church, and community associations, with the human target group for initiating practice the epistemic, cultural, and the opposition political parties.

## **Empirical Project**

The empirical project chosen to test my theory is a case study of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Dayton Accord, comprising: an overview of national identities and interests that correspond to the respective Serb and Croat institutions of ethnonationalism, and to Muslim secular nationalism; the development of indicators of ethnonationalist practice in order to test behavioural change in the post-Dayton era; identification of the institutions of Dayton; a critique of the results of Dayton with the indicators; and an analysis of Dayton and the implementation process and how they addressed my two objectives, structural and ideational, for institutional transformation.

## **Institutions of Ethnonationalism: National Identity and National Interests**

Nationalism is a European phenomenon that developed in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Croat and Serb peoples experienced their own national awakenings that fed the separatist and irredentist tendencies of the Croats within the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and those of the Serbs under the Ottomans. The institutions of ethnonationalism to which I refer are those political structures and ideas that were designed to formulate an exclusive nation-state with political and economic power concentrated in the hands of the creators.

**Croatia:** Croatia was subordinate to the Austro-Hungarian Empire from 1091 to 1917. The awakening of Croat nationalism within the Empire coincided with both the Serb and general European tendencies. In the late 18<sup>th</sup> Century and post-Napoleonic period it was a reaction to Magyar (Hungarian) nationalism and its concomitant policies. By the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century Croatian political autonomy and territorial integrity was guaranteed under the federalist Austrian constitution. Mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> Century nationalist movements, such as the Illyrian and Yugoslav ones, concentrated on regrouping Slavs within the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Nationalism was based on a dialect of what is now called the Serbo-Croat language. The Serbs were excluded from the Illyrian concept, but included in the pan-Slav one of Yugoslavism. The Croats were the impetus behind the creation of the Triunion Kingdom of Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia in 1848, and the creation of the Kingdom of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs in 1918. The belief at that time (one that had already failed in Bosnia under Austrian authority) was that a pan-Slav identity could be created, an identity that would transcend the ethnic ones. The constitution recognized the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes as one people – the "triune nation".

The Serbian Vidovdan constitution of 1921 concentrated power in the hands of the Serbs, divided the country into thirty-three "oblasts" or provinces, and fuelled extant nationalist tendencies (The Croat Peasant Party, representing the majority of the Croat population, had refused to participate in the vote for the constitution). Disagreement culminated in the dissolution of Parliament by King Alexander in 1929, the establishment of a dictatorial monarchist regime, and the imposition of a completely new division of the state into nine geographic areas that cut across ethnic borders. This remained the status quo until the constitutional debates in 1937 led to a new solution to the Croat national question (the "Sporazdum"), whereby in 1939 Croatia was granted a ban and its territory readjusted to reflect its notion of homeland.

The results of the war and the Ustasha treatment of Serbs and Croats are well documented. Suffice to say that atrocities effectuated by the Ustasha regime, and the Serbian Chetnik response, consolidated national groups and perpetuated exclusivity and us/them dualisms.

Under the communists of Josip Broz (Tito), the Croats were recognized as a constituent people and were allocated a Republic, one that did not – because no territorial configuration can – include all the Croats in the Balkans. Despite a written liberal constitution that did mention the Communist League, political power was concentrated in the hands of the League in Belgrade. Despite multiple strategies that attempted to reconfigure party power, ethnic policy, and federal-regional dynamics, Tito was unable to prevent confrontation between the Croats and Serbs. The Muslims were used as an instrument to balance ethnic power, and the Bosnian Republic a method of blocking Croat and Serb territorial aspirations based on their respective understandings of national homeland.

In sum, one can discern a Croat interest in developing the structures of an independent state – a greater Croatia - that comprises the territory and people of Croatia and parts of Slavonia and BiH.

**Serbia:** The Serb national awakening inspired the wars against Ottoman occupation (capitulated in 1459), leading to political autonomy in 1826 and independence in 1878. Several of the ideas motivating Serbian nationalism, their related belief in national primacy, and their anti-Islamic

tendencies are as follows: their defeat (and the defeat of the Bosnian forces) in 1389 at the Battle of Kosovo that temporarily denied the Turks the occupation of Europe; the pan-Serb concept developed during the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century that excluded Croats but included both Orthodox Bosnians and "brother" Muslim Bosnians, and territory in Bosnia, Slavonia, Croatia, Macedonia, Kosovo, and Montenegro; and their role in accelerating the defeat of the Ottoman Empire and in fighting against Germanism in the Balkans.

Serb ethnonationalist structures developed during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century include those noted above, namely: the Vidovdan Constitution of 1921, Serbian King Alexander's monarchical dictatorship, and the concentration of political and economic power in Belgrade during the period of the second Yugoslavia until the 1974 Constitution gave the autonomous province of Kosovo and the autonomous region of Vojvodina the same powers as the other Republics.

**Bosnia:** Before the fall of Bosnia to the Turkish forces at Ključ in 1463, the kingdom and its people had developed an independent and distinct history. However, the dynamics of Ottoman rule until 1878 followed by Austrian administration then rule (1908) until 1918, combined with the influence of Serbian and Croatian nationalism in the adjacent states had the effect of dissociating the Bosnian people. The Ottoman's demographic division was based on religion, and this system was perpetuated by the Austrians despite an attempt between 1882 – 1903 to develop a Bosnian identity. Following Austrian occupation in 1878, the Orthodox gained a relative majority. The creation of a common identity was impossible because the Orthodox had identifies themselves with the Serbs, and the Catholics with the Croats. The Muslims were perceived by both sides as consisting of either foreigners or converted Slavs that belonged to either the Croat or Serb people. The Muslim identity continued to be based on religion and they were not recognized as a national group (constituent nation) in the Kingdom, the first Yugoslavia or the second Yugoslavia until 1968.

Bosnian institutions since Austrian occupation may be characterized as secular and multiethnic. Muslim nationalist movements were relevant only until Muslim recognition in 1968, and all three ethnic groups shared power in their Parliamentary Assembly (although Serbs enjoyed a preponderance of power within the Bosnian Communist League). The Muslim homeland does not extend beyond the pre-war boundaries of BiH and their identity is inclusive in the sense that citizenship and social status is not related to ethnicity. However, the Croat and Serb Bosnian homeland is currently inseparable from that of their namesakes as by adopting those identities, they also adopted the corresponding interests.

## **The Institutions of the General Framework Agreement and Annexes.**

The General Framework for Peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina and its Annexes, the so-called Dayton Accord, was initialled on 21 November and signed in Paris on 14 December 1995. Its political structures include: the five institutions of the Dayton Agreement (the Parliamentary assembly, the Council of Ministers, the Central Bank, the Constitutional Court and the Standing Committee on Military Matters); the Constitution (fundamental principles, parliament and distribution of power, electorate, formal and informal political executive, administration, federal distribution of power and responsibilities to entities - federalism, and amendment procedure); and the governments of the entities and their constitutions. Bosnia-Herzegovina is supposed to be a

liberal parliamentary democracy, organized as a weak confederal state. The informal institutions of Dayton are those associated with liberalism (constitutionalism and democracy), market liberalism and balance of power.

It assumes that within the Bosnian state, national identity, state territory and political structures coincide, although it contradicts itself in permitting dual citizenship within a weak confederation. It assumes that inter-ethnic territorial claims are eliminated by inclusion within a state territory in which all three groups are considered the constituent nations. It makes the same assumptions about the democratic system and constitutionalism as noted in my critique of the Western paradigm above. By implementing a market economy it attests to a belief that it has the best chance of improving the economic conditions, and to beliefs about self-adjusting markets, privatization, weak government interference, and other principles of economic liberalism. Finally, the military and confidence-building annexes, supplemented by the US initiated Arm and Train Program, assumes that security is guaranteed better by mutual deterrence in a balance of power system, than by arms control in a collective security regime.

Durable peace or uncertain future? Evidence of behavioural change.

In general, the success of the Dayton state-building project is best described by those organizations responsible for the civilian implementation of the plan – the Office of the High Representative (OHR) and the Peace Implementation Council (PIC):

The forces of ethnic separation remain stronger than the forces of ethnic reintegration. Bosnia is still – six months after the Peace Agreement – a country coming apart – not a country coming together. (June 1996)

Regrettably, a lack of political will to cooperate constructively, the danger of the renewal of confrontation mentality, mutual mistrust and accusations continue to stall the peace process. (July 1997)

Peace, and the institutions of civil society to uphold it, remains fragile. The war has left a legacy of bitterness and distrust ...the majority of common institutions are operating insufficiently. Permanent facilities have not been established. Illegal structures of govt in the Federation have not been dissolved or integrated ... Lack of strong multi-ethnic political parties and a structured civil society ... Human rights are still not adequately protected. Citizenship is not legally defined.... (December 1997)

The overall picture in Bosnia and Herzegovina is changing for the better, and life is returning to normal. Yet, notwithstanding these accomplishments, huge and complex tasks are still ahead of us. Therefore, it would be premature to say that the peace process is yet irreversible or lasting. (January 1998)

In my empirical project I have chosen historically relevant indicators of ethnonationalist practice in order to determine, based on an interpretation of the historical record, whether ethnonationalist practice, and by extension the institutions of ethnonationalism, are or are not positively changing in the Dayton post-war era. This implies measuring the shift in identity group behaviour towards

reconciliation, reintegration and accommodation from December 1995 to September 1998). My indicators are the nature of the governing system, choice of civic or national identity, identity group status, human rights, and the intensity of the national question (homeland and political autonomy).

First, the nature of the governing system refers to whether the system is ethnocentric or cooperative (i.e. equity of the power-sharing arrangements, degree of party pluralism, choice of constitutional principles), specifically: the relationship and ethnic/entity power-sharing between the various parliaments, councils and levels of government; party activity; ethnicity and the constitutions; government decisions and legislation; cooperation on execution of war-crime trial decisions, land arbitration, national monument approval, IEBL and border disputes, and public corporation coordination; cooperation on economic/social issues; constitutional compatibility between the state and the entities; and freedom of movement of persons, goods, services and capital.

The Chairman of the PIC painted a gloomy picture in his conclusions at the Bonn, Germany, meeting on 10 December 1997, two years after the Dayton Accord had entered into force, stating that:

The majority of common institutions are operating insufficiently. Permanent facilities have not been established. Illegal structures of government in the Federation have not been dissolved or integrated ... The implementation of municipal elections still encounters resistance in several municipalities. Lack of strong multi-ethnic political parties and a structured civil society. Lack of legislation on de-mining and the continuing manufacture of mines ... Property and housing legislation block the return of refugees and displaced persons to their pre-war homes ... There are no functioning Public Corporations ... The lack of an economic policy framework is preventing an IMF Standby Arrangement and World Bank adjustment lending and renders the country vulnerable to financial crisis. Full normalisation of Bosnia and Herzegovina's relations with its immediate neighbours has not taken place.

By September of 1998, the record indicates that cooperation is still lacking but government structures are in place, although legislation is at times enforced by the High Representative. The September 12/13 elections reduced the concentration of federal power in the hands of the leading ethnic parties – the SDA, HDZ, and SDS: "[I]n general they represented, with one notable exception, further evidence of steady, incremental progress towards a more moderate and pluralistic political environment in BiH." The exception was the election of a Serb hard-liner from the Bosnian branch of the Radical Party, Nikola Poplasen, as president of the RS. Poplasen replaced President Plavsic.

Ultimately, cooperation and coordination of all major civilian aspects of the Agreement seem only now to be in place. Important issues remain that relate to transport and travel, power supply, telecommunications, and finance. The Konvertible Marka (KM) issued by the Central Bank of BiH (CBBH) was adopted last summer and its use has begun to spread throughout the country. The process of liquidating the NBBH, the former Central Bank, is ongoing. However, to initiate the liquidation process, a freeze of NBBH assets was ordered on 16 July 1998, but the Federation Government subsequently ordered that the freeze be ignored.

The second indicator is the choice of civic or national identity (inclusive civic or exclusive primordial identity) which refers to the choice of religious, cultural and linguistic identification and symbols (e.g. flag, anthem, and currency). The influence of the cultural / epistemic community is fundamental to linking national identity to symbols of state identity. The Parliamentary Assembly finally chose the state flag in 1998 but both the RS and the Federation retained Entity flags and Coats of Arms. The Croat flag is still present despite the fact that the institutions of Herzeg-Bosna are supposed to have been dissolved. The national anthem is yet to be chosen although entries have been submitted.

The third indicator is identity group status, which refers to status of citizenship, intergroup salience, comparative social/economic status, and attempts at cultural assimilation, differentiation and alloplastic activities. The constituent people of BiH are the Muslims, Croats and Serbs and "Others". Muslims are recognized as a national group in accordance with the policy developed by the Communist League in 1968. Citizens will hold dual Entity and Republic citizenship and passports, although citizenship is still not legally defined. Social status appears guaranteed by the criteria of proportional ethnic representation in the Parliamentary Assembly. Economic status is divergent because of the withholding of reconstruction aid from the RS pending their respect of the GFA. There has been no attempt at cultural assimilation although linguistic differentiation has surfaced in terms of Islamic, Serb and Croat words entering respective vocabularies, and in the continued Serb use of the Cyrillic alphabet. Devilizing as fundamental Islamic extremists, Ustasha and Chetniks has subsided since the war's end.

The fourth indicator is the human rights record which effectively summarizes ethnic relations, specifically: interethnic violence, racism and harassment; religious and linguistic intolerance; refugee/DP return and reintegration; and the exchange of bodies and prisoners. In December 1997, human rights were still not adequately protected and violations "endemic". The PIC Chairman concluded: "Neither Entity has taken the necessary steps to ensure that its laws are compatible with the European Convention on Human Rights. In both the Federation and Republika Srpska, the fair trial standards set forth in the Convention are clearly and routinely violated....Comprehensive plans to facilitate returns have not been implemented."

More recently, abuse continues although on a smaller scale. It appears to be reserved to police forces and in periods of attempted DP and refugee return. The International Criminal Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) has not had great success in bringing war criminals to trial.

My final, and perhaps most important indicator is the intensity of the national question of political autonomy and territorial rights (homeland). Again, the institutions of Herzeg-Bosna have yet to be dissolved and the RS has not denied its intention to join Serbia at a future date.

Seen in its entirety, one could conclude that ethnonationalist practice is diminishing and that the structures of the GFA seem to be gradually improving. The results of the September 1998 elections, almost three years after the Agreement entered into force, are a positive sign that moderate parties are gaining popular support. The question remains if the structures are durable or whether the Serbs and Croats are engaging in nominal practice, jumping through the hoops to receive international aid. A method of determining if it is the former or the latter is by examining whether my structural and ideational objectives have been met.

Analysis of Dayton and the implementation process. Structural and ideational objectives for institutional transformation

As I have stated in the theoretical section of this paper, the Western approach assumes that positive behavioural change will occur with the practice of liberal structures, whereby practice is linked to rational material interests. In keeping with this assumption, the GFA included nothing that was explicitly designed to build a Bosnian society, despite the fact that the agreement itself and all reconstruction aid depended upon the good faith of the identity groups involved. This is evident in the General Framework Agreement, its annexes, all the preceding accords and decisions leading up to the GFA, and the official statements of the Peace implementation Council and of the OHR during the first six months of the peace implementation process. They all agreed on one thing: interethnic cooperation was fundamental to the success of the plan. The entities were to act "in good faith", and were to conform to the accord if they were to receive reconstruction and development funds. The problem was that the groups did not act in good faith, and were slow (if at all) to fulfil the objectives of the Accord.

[The PIC] also sent a clear message that, while the international community remained committed to the peace process, responsibility for reconciliation lay with the authorities and citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who had to progressively take charge of their own affairs. (December 1996)

At present the main responsibility for the realization of the civilian component of the Peace Agreement lies with the Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities - the common institutions and leadership of the entities. Only the coordinated, constructive work of the representatives of all three peoples could make the peace process in the country irreversible. (July 1997)

The main responsibility in this process, and in particular in turning the Peace Agreement into living reality, lies with those who signed it. (January 1998)

Analysis of the peace process indicates a very moderate change in the approach to implementation after several months and years of poor cooperation by the identity groups. It was not a realignment of priorities, but a development of interest in rebuilding the Bosnian society. This may have been because the structures were coming into place and it was either time (or those responsible for implementation had more time) to turn attention elsewhere, because of the impact of Track II diplomacy undertaken by interested third parties, because the carrot and stick approach was not enticing the identity groups to cooperate, or because there was a general realization that despite the time and effort injected into the peace project it was still not irreversible.

Structural objective. The fundamental material social circumstances that strengthened politics of identity before the disintegration of Yugoslavia were the unequal disbursement of the federal budget and the disproportional representation of Serbs in the Bosnian and Federal Communist Leagues. Economic disparities may continue to exist but only because the RS has received substantially less funding from the international community in accordance with the policy of linking reconstruction with economic aid. The Parliamentary Assembly (two houses) has complex ethnic participatory criteria for the enactment of legislation. While this ensures that the

three groups are represented and power is equitably (ethnically) shared, it encourages ethnic voting blocks. Dominant political parties continue to intimidate opposition party members, especially at election time.

Lack of political cooperation hampers the work of the Presidency, the Council of Ministers and the Parliamentary Assembly, and the Herzeg-Bosna parallel structures continue to exist. The territorial arrangement does not appear to coincide with the identity groups' understanding of what is theirs to claim – their homeland. A weak confederate structure does not dissipate the urge to reclaim lost territory in either of the two Entities. A unitary state would resolve the homeland issue within BiH, but the RS is unwilling to surrender any of its political autonomy and its de facto statehood. Although inter-ethnic voting has not yet occurred, moderate ethnic parties have gained more seats in the recent elections. The principles of liberalism – constitutionalism and democracy – are included in the Constitution of BiH, the Federation and the RS. The practice of democracy in terms of voter participation is high, but in terms of encouraging a multi-party system it is weak. The practice of constitutionalism – guaranteed rights and freedoms - fails in face of human rights abuse and the prevention of refugee and DP returns.

Ideational. At the Florence mid-year review in June 1996, High Representative Carl Bildt stated: "I have said that the key to long-term peace is genuine reconciliation between the people living on either side of former dividing lines. Reconciliation is the only way forward, because retribution will lead to further conflict ..." However, the key at that time for reconciliation was, and still is, the ICTY – "the focal point of the effort to ensure that accountability – and by extension – reconciliation is achieved." At the same meeting in 1996, the PIC chairman concluded, "Religious leaders of all faiths should exercise their influence to encourage the development of civil society." However, civil society is later defined as public participation in society via associations. In December 1997 the High Representative professed a "commitment to construction of a civil society" but left reconciliation again in the hands of the ICTY (war crimes), the missing persons commission, and the various human rights agencies (including the Chamber, the Ombudsman and the UNHCR).

Treatment of the ideational objective has gained some momentum in the last two years. As I have stated above, the medium of ideational change includes schools, the media (radio, TV, newspaper, Internet), the Church, community associations and the political opposition. Recent idea-targeted methods of changing the practice of reproducing ethnocentric behaviour include: the Textbook Review Project designed to remove offensive materials from textbooks in use in primary and secondary schools; the adoption of common symbols such as the KM by the CBBH, and soon a national BiH anthem submitted to the Independent Commission for Common Symbols; community policing; the establishment of Municipal envoys and encouragement of multiethnic municipalities; the Public Service Information Campaign; and the regulation of media.

## **Conclusions**

The Western rational model embodied in the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina, signed in December 1995, was incomplete because it failed to include ideational elements that addressed the issue of national and civic identity and that would

facilitate a transformation from ethnonationalist to civic institutions. It was not until the consolidation period between December 1996 and December 1998 that emphasis began to be placed on the importance of civil society, and September 1998 when a strategy that included values was prepared. It has taken this long to realize, and I am not sure that it is realized by everyone, that cooperation cannot be based on threats of withholding funds for economic reconstruction alone. Long-term resolution of conflict and enduring state structures depend as much on group ideas as group interests. The loci of ideational change are municipalities, schools, public associations, and the Church. The medium through which ideas are transmitted are the media (TV, radio, newspapers and journals, INTERNET), opposition political parties, printed textbooks and novels, and the epistemic, religious and cultural community leaders. The mission chosen by the international community to build the state of Bosnia-Herzegovina will not be complete until the three constituent groups adopt an inclusive civic identity based on constitutionally guaranteed equality and liberty that transcends the exclusive national identities that promote incompatible conceptualizations of the nation-state.