

# H-NATO

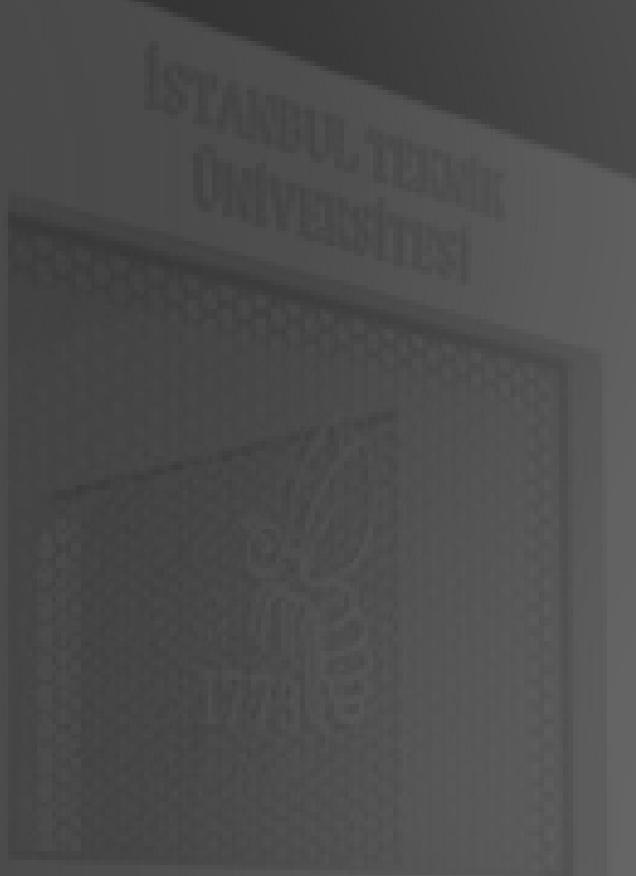
## STUDY GUIDE

#LETSBEEUNITED

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**BOARD MEMBER**

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**ACADEMIC ASSISTANT**



Letter from the Secretary-General

Dear Delegates,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to ITUMUN 2026.

By choosing to take part in this conference, you have already done something meaningful: you have chosen dialogue over indifference, understanding over assumption, and engagement over silence. In a world increasingly shaped by division, conflict, and uncertainty, such choices matter.

Today's international landscape is marked by ongoing conflicts, humanitarian crises, and profound global challenges that demand more than rhetoric. They demand informed, open-minded, and principled individuals, particularly from the younger generation, who are willing to listen, to question, and to act responsibly. MUNs offers precisely this space: one where ideas are tested, diplomacy is practised, and perspectives are broadened.

As delegates, you are not merely representing states or institutions; you are actually engaging in the art of negotiation, the discipline of research, and the responsibility of decision-making. Approach this experience with curiosity, respect, and intellectual courage. Learn not only from debate, but from one another.

On behalf of the Secretariat, I sincerely hope that ITUMUN 2026 will challenge you, inspire you, and leave you better equipped to contribute to a more peaceful and cooperative world.

I wish you a rewarding conference and every success in your deliberations.

Yours sincerely,

**Abdullah Kikati**

Secretary-General

## Letter from the Chairboard

Dear participants of Historical North Atlantic Treaty Organization committee of the Istanbul Technical University Model United Nations Conference 2026,

I would like to welcome you all to this prestigious conference. My name is Yasin Yıldırım, and I study Economics at Istanbul University. I will be serving as a board member among my colleagues İpek Şen and Sarp Batu Uysal.

The Kosovo conflict is one the most pressing issues of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Up until 1990s the United States and Europe enjoyed the prosperity of a peaceful world. Naturally the tragedies of the collapse of Yugoslavia shocked the world, especially Europe. Witnessing and documenting war crimes, crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing and a refugee crisis as they happen was one of the most traumatizing events for the international community.

The United Nations, North Atlantic Treaty and European Union felt the need to intervene instead of just watching this humanitarian crisis unfold. And you ,participant, as the ambassadors of member states of the NATO will try to bring an end to this conflict. Do not let the length of this guide frighten you. Historical background provides a deeper understanding of the root causes of the conflict. The important part for you is 1980-98. If you have limited time, please try to focus on what is important (1990-98).

Hope to see you in the conference and if you have any questions, please contact me via e-mail.

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Kindest regards,

Board Members of H-NATO,

İpek Şen

Sarp Batu Uysal

Yasin Yıldırım.

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## 1 INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMITTEE

Founded in 1949 as a bulwark against Soviet aggression, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) remains, seventy-seven years later, the pillar of U.S.-Europe military cooperation. An expanding block of NATO allies has taken on a broad range of missions since the close of the Cold War, many well beyond the Euro-Atlantic region, in countries such as Afghanistan and Libya.<sup>1</sup>

After much discussion and debate, the North Atlantic Treaty was signed on 4 April, 1949. In the Treaty's renowned Article 5, the new Allies agreed "an armed attack against one or more of them... shall be considered an attack against them all" and that following such an attack, each Ally would take "such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force" in response.

Significantly, Articles 2 and 3 of the Treaty had important purposes not immediately germane to the threat of attack. Article 3 laid the foundation for cooperation in military preparedness between the Allies, and Article 2 allowed them some leeway to engage in non-military cooperation.



While the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty had created Allies, it had not created a military structure that could effectively coordinate their actions. This changed when growing

<sup>1</sup> Masters, J. (2025, June 24). What is NATO? *Council on Foreign Relations*.

worries about Soviet intentions culminated in the Soviet detonation of an atomic bomb in 1949 and in the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950. The effect upon the Alliance was dramatic. NATO soon gained a consolidated command structure with a military Headquarters based in the Parisian suburb of Rocquencourt, near Versailles. This was Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, or SHAPE, with US General Dwight D. Eisenhower as the first Supreme Allied Commander Europe, or SACEUR. Soon afterwards, the Allies established a permanent civilian secretariat in Paris and named NATO's first Secretary General, Lord Ismay of the United Kingdom.

With the benefit of aid and a security umbrella, political stability was gradually restored to Western Europe, and the post-war economic miracle began. New Allies joined the Alliance: Greece and Türkiye in 1952, and West Germany in 1955. European political integration took its first hesitant steps. In reaction to West Germany's NATO accession, the Soviet Union and its Eastern European client states formed the Warsaw Pact in 1955. Europe settled into an uneasy stand-off, symbolised by the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961.

During this time, NATO adopted the strategic doctrine of "Massive Retaliation" – if the Soviet Union attacked, NATO would respond with nuclear weapons. The intended effect of this doctrine was to deter either side from risk-taking since any attack, however small, could have led to a full nuclear exchange. Simultaneously, "Massive Retaliation" allowed Alliance members to focus their energies on economic growth rather than on maintaining large conventional armies. The Alliance also took its first steps towards a political as well as a military role. Since the Alliance's founding, the smaller Allies in particular had argued for greater non-military cooperation, and the Suez Crisis in the fall of 1956 laid bare the lack of political consultation that divided some members. In addition, the Soviet Union's launch of the Sputnik satellite in 1956 shocked the Allies into greater scientific cooperation. A report delivered to the North Atlantic Council by the Foreign Ministers of Norway, Italy, and Canada – the "Three Wise Men" – recommended more robust consultation and scientific cooperation within the Alliance, and the report's conclusions led, *inter alia*, to the establishment of the NATO Science Programme.<sup>2</sup>

In the 1960s, this uneasy but stable status quo began to change. Cold War tensions re-ignited as Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev and US President John F. Kennedy narrowly avoided conflict in Cuba, and as American involvement in Vietnam escalated. Despite this unpropitious start, by decade's end, what had been primarily a defence-based organisation came to embody a new phenomenon: détente, a relaxation of tensions between the Western and Eastern blocs driven by a grudging acceptance of the status quo.

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<sup>2</sup> (*A Short History of NATO*, n.d.,)



*Secretary General of the USSR, Mikhail Gorbachev (left), and U.S. President Ronald Reagan (right)*

Headquartered in Brussels, NATO is a consensus-based alliance in which decisions must be unanimous. However, individual states or subgroups of allies can initiate action outside of NATO's auspices. For instance, the United States, France, and the United Kingdom began policing a UN-sanctioned no-fly zone in Libya in early 2011 before transferring command of the operation to NATO. Member states are not required to participate in every NATO operation; Germany and Poland declined to contribute directly to the campaign in Libya.

NATO's military structure comprises two strategic commands: the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, located near Mons, Belgium, and the Allied Command Transformation, located in Norfolk, Virginia. The Supreme Allied Commander Europe oversees all NATO military operations and is always a U.S. flag or general officer; U.S. Army General Christopher G. Cavoli currently holds this position. Although the alliance has an integrated command, most forces remain under their respective national authorities until NATO operations commence.

NATO's secretary-general, former Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte, is the alliance's civilian leader. Rutte took office in October 2024, succeeding Norwegian politician Jens Stoltenberg, who had led the alliance for a decade. Stoltenberg championed NATO's expansion and support for Ukraine in the wake of Russia's full-scale invasion. The secretary-general is also charged with chairing NATO's principal political body, the North Atlantic Council, which is composed of high-level delegates from each member state.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> (Masters, 2025)

## 2 Introduction to the Agenda Item

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, formed after World War II by Josip Broz Tito, consisted of six independent states: Serbia, Montenegro, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia and North Macedonia. Josip Broz Tito managed to balance these six states and held Yugoslavia together. After his death in 1980 the fragile system he built started to crack.

Yugoslavia struggled in various areas in the 60s and 70s. “Symmetrical Federalism” was Tito’s response to formalize equality among the six republics and two autonomous provinces (Kosovo and Vojvodina). This system (including a rotating presidency for Yugoslavia) was embedded into the constitution of 1974. A system which promoted smaller republics and limited powers of the big two, Serbia and Croatia. Serbia’s place in the federation was now much less powerful and two of their provinces received more autonomy (Kosovo and Vojvodina). Serbia’s displeasure at the independent role assigned to its autonomous provinces and the promotion of minority identity (especially that of the Albanians in Kosovo) was the leading factor of Slobodan Milošević’s Presidency.

Slovenia and Croatia declared their secession from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in June, 1991. In December Macedonia followed and in March 1992 Bosniaks and Croats voted to secede. Yugoslav People’s Army (JNA) and Serbian forces clashed with Slovenian forces and following conflicts pushed Yugoslavia into a civil war. Dayton Accords, signed in 1995, ended the clash between Serbia, Bosnia and Croatia. Meanwhile, growing pressure in Kosovo from the majority ethnic Albanians for greater autonomy escalated into civil war in 1998.

Kosovo holds a significant importance for Serbians. The Serbian Orthodox Church was seated in Kosovo. In 1946 half the population of Kosova was ethnic Albanians and the other was mostly Serbs. High birth rates and Serbian out-migration resulted in a demographic shift in the region. In the 1990s, Albanians made up 80% of the population and Serbs were less than 10%.

Serbs consider Kosovo as an integral part of Serbia because of its history and Kosovar Albanians request independence. Slobodan Milošević abrogated constitutional autonomy of Kosovo in 1989. Kosovar Albanians initiated a policy of nonviolent protest. The international community was late to address the issue and tensions increased. Albanians were much more radicalized by 1996. The Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) emerged and started attacks on Serbian police and politicians, escalating the situation over the next two years.

By 1998, the KLA’s activities could be classified as significant armed conflict. Eventually, Yugoslav military forces and Serbian Police tried to regain control of the area. A wave of refugees fled the region as the result of atrocities committed by the police, paramilitary groups, and the army. The situation became widely reported in the media around the world. The United States, Great Britain, Germany, France, Italy and Russia created an informal coalition called The Contact Group and demanded a cease-fire. Milošević, who had become president of Yugoslavia

in 1997, agreed to meet most of the demands but failed to implement them. During the cease-fire KLA regrouped and rearmed, renewing its attacks. The Serbian and Yugoslav forces ruthlessly responded with a counteroffensive and engaged in ethnic cleansing. The United Nations Security Council condemned the situation and imposed an arms embargo.

In February 1999, diplomatic talks began in Rambouillet, France. The talks ended the next month. NATO air strikes began on March 24, and the Serbian military was targeted. In response, Serbians and Yugoslav forces displaced ethnic Albanians of Kosovo, driving them out into Albania and Macedonia. The NATO bombing campaign continued for 11 weeks and was indeed after NATO and Serbia signed a peace accord.

### 3 Key Terms

**Sovereignty:** The authority of a state to govern itself without external interference. It includes control over territory, population, and political institutions. It is a core principle of international law.

**Territorial integrity:** The principle that a state's borders should not be violated or altered by force. It protects states from external and internal attempts at fragmentation. It often conflicts with claims of self-determination.

**Self-determination:** The right of a people to choose their political status and form of government. It may involve autonomy, federation, or independence. It is recognized in international law but unevenly applied.

**Autonomy:** A form of self-government within a larger state. It allows local institutions to manage internal affairs while remaining under central sovereignty. It is often used to manage ethnic or regional diversity.

**Secession:** The act of breaking away from an existing state to form a new one. It is usually controversial and often violent. International law does not clearly endorse or prohibit it.

**Statehood:** The condition of being recognized as a state under international law. It typically requires a population, territory, government, and capacity for foreign relations. Recognition by other states is politically decisive.

**International recognition:** Acceptance of a political entity as a state by other states. It allows participation in diplomacy and international institutions. Recognition is political, not automatic.

**UN Security Council:** The main UN body responsible for international peace and security. It can authorize sanctions, peacekeeping, or military force. Its five permanent members hold veto power.

**International law:** A system of rules governing relations between states and international actors. It includes treaties, customs, and legal principles. Enforcement depends largely on state cooperation.

**Legitimacy:** The perception that authority is rightful and justified. It can be legal, moral, or political. Loss of legitimacy weakens state power.

**Post-Cold War order:** The global system that emerged after 1991. It is marked by U.S. dominance, NATO expansion, and new humanitarian norms. It also includes unstable post-socialist states.

**Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY):** The state formed by Serbia and Montenegro after 1992. It claimed continuity with socialist Yugoslavia. It was the main state actor in the Kosovo war.

**Serbia and Montenegro:** The two republics that composed the FRY. Serbia dominated federal institutions. Montenegro later became independent in 2006.

**Kosovo Albanians:** The ethnic Albanian majority population of Kosovo. They sought autonomy and later independence. They were the main victims of state repression in the 1990s.

**Kosovo Serbs:** The Serbian minority in Kosovo. They viewed Kosovo as central to Serbian history and identity. Many fled after 1999 due to insecurity.

**Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA):** An armed Albanian insurgent group. It fought Yugoslav and Serbian forces in the late 1990s. It aimed for Kosovo's independence.

**UNMIK:** The UN mission governing Kosovo after 1999. It managed civil administration and institution-building. It held authority until Kosovo declared independence.

**KFOR:** A NATO-led peacekeeping force in Kosovo. It ensures security and protects civilians. It still operates today.

**Contact Group:** A group of major powers coordinating Balkan diplomacy. It included the US, UK, France, Germany, Italy, and Russia. It mediated peace efforts.

**Rambouillet Accords:** A failed 1999 peace proposal for Kosovo. It offered autonomy under international supervision. Yugoslavia rejected its security terms.

**Humanitarian intervention:** Military action justified by civilian protection. It challenges traditional sovereignty. Kosovo is a major example.

**Air campaign:** A military strategy relying mainly on air power. NATO used it in 1999. No ground invasion occurred.

**Operation Allied Force:** NATO's 1999 bombing campaign against Yugoslavia. It aimed to stop repression in Kosovo. It lasted 78 days.

**Counterinsurgency:** Military operations against guerrilla forces. Yugoslavia used it against the KLA. It involved heavy civilian impact.

**Peacekeeping:** Deployment of international forces to maintain peace. It follows ceasefires or conflicts. KFOR is an example.

**Post-conflict stabilization:** Rebuilding order after war. It includes security, governance, and economy. Kosovo underwent this after 1999.

**Security vacuum:** Absence of effective authority. It leads to crime or revenge violence. It occurred in Kosovo after Yugoslav withdrawal.

**Buffer state:** A state between rivals that reduces direct conflict. FYROM played this role regionally. It absorbed refugee pressure.

**Alliance cohesion:** Unity among allied states. It requires shared goals and discipline. The US worked to maintain it in NATO.

**Ethnic cleansing:** Forced removal of an ethnic group. It uses violence or terror. It occurred in Kosovo in 1998–1999.

**Forced displacement:** Removal of people from their homes. It can be internal or across borders. Millions were displaced in the Balkans.

**Refugee flows:** Movement of people fleeing conflict across borders. Kosovo produced major flows in 1999. Neighbouring states were strained.

**Human rights violations:** Abuse of basic rights. Includes killings, torture, and repression. Documented widely in Kosovo.

**Civilian protection:** Safeguarding non-combatants in war. It is central to humanitarian law. NATO used it as justification.

**Minority rights:** Protections for ethnic or religious groups. They include language, culture, and security. Central in post-war Kosovo.

**Return and reintegration:** Bringing displaced people back. It includes housing, safety, and jobs. It was uneven in Kosovo.

**Balkan stability:** Regional peace in Southeast Europe. Conflicts often spill across borders. Kosovo affected the whole region.

**Spillover effects:** Conflict spreading to nearby areas. Kosovo affected FYROM and Albania. Refugees and weapons moved across borders.

**Regional security:** Safety of a specific geographic area. It depends on cooperation. The Balkans remain sensitive.

**Ethnic nationalism:** Politics based on ethnic identity. It fuelled Yugoslav wars. It opposed civic identity.

**Demographic balance:** Population proportions among groups. Shifts change political power. Kosovo's balance favoured Albanians.

**Euro-Atlantic integration:** Entry into NATO and the EU. It symbolizes alignment with the West. Kosovo and FYROM pursue it.

## 4 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### 4.1 The Fall of Empire and the Seeds of Conflict: Kosovo and the Birth of Yugoslavia (1912–1939)

#### 4.1.1 The Balkan Wars and Kosovo's Exit from Ottoman Rule

The Ottoman Empire's capacity to retain political power and territorial dominance in the Balkans declined significantly in the decades before the Balkan Wars. While nationalist movements among the Christian populations of the empire gained traction, central governance was undermined by administrative weakness, fiscal insolvency, and military inefficiency. The Balkan states increasingly saw territorial expansion as both possible and essential for national

consolidation in the unstable political climate brought about by the Ottoman Empire's slow decline.

The involvement of the *European Great Powers*, whose strategic interests in the region influenced diplomatic outcomes and fostered instability, further accelerated this process. *Austria-Hungary* aimed to prevent *Serbian* expansion and maintain the balance of power, while Russia backed Slavic states as part of its larger Pan-Slavic agenda. In the meantime, internal reforms like the 1908 *Young Turk Revolution* were unable to end imperial fragmentation or ease ethnic tensions. Early in the 20th century, Ottoman decline, growing Balkan nationalism, and great power rivalry had all contributed to the establishment of the Balkan League and the start of the 1912 war.

*The First Balkan War* was fought between the members of the *Balkan League*-*Serbia*, *Bulgaria*, *Greece*, and *Montenegro*- and the *Ottoman Empire*. The Balkan allies were soon victorious. In Thrace, the Bulgarians defeated the main Ottoman forces, advancing to the outskirts of Constantinople and laying siege to Adrianople (Edirne). In Macedonia, the Serbian army achieved a great victory at Kumanovo that enabled it to capture Bitola and to join forces with the Montenegrins and enter Skopje. The Greeks, meanwhile, occupied Salonika (Thessaloníki) and advanced on Ioánnina. In Albania, the Montenegrins besieged Shkodër, and the Serbs entered Durrës.

The Turkish collapse was so complete that all parties were willing to conclude an armistice on December 3, 1912. A peace conference was begun in London, but, after a coup d'état by the Young Turks in Constantinople in January 1913, war with the Ottomans was resumed. Again, the allies were victorious: Ioánnina fell to the Greeks and Adrianople to the Bulgarians. Under a peace treaty signed in London on May 30, 1913, the Ottoman Empire lost almost all of its remaining European territory, including all of Macedonia and Albania. Albanian independence was insisted upon by the European powers, and Macedonia was to be divided among the Balkan allies.



*The Second Balkan War* began when *Serbia*, *Greece*, and *Romania* quarrelled with *Bulgaria* over the division of their joint conquests in *Macedonia*. On June 1, 1913, Serbia and Greece formed an alliance against Bulgaria, and the war began on the night of June 29–30, 1913, when *King Ferdinand of Bulgaria* ordered his troops to attack Serbian and Greek forces in Macedonia. The Bulgarian offensive, benefiting from surprise, was initially successful, but Greek and Serbian defenders retired in good order.

The Serbian army counterattacked on July 2 and drove a wedge into the Bulgarian line. Greek reserves advanced to the front on July 3, and a series of attacks over the following days threatened to turn the left flank of an entire Bulgarian army. In an effort to save their force from being cut off entirely, the Bulgarians launched a desperate attack on the Serbian lines. Once again, the Bulgarians achieved momentary success, but by July 10, the offensive had completely stalled. On July 11, the Romanian army crossed the Bulgarian frontier and began an unopposed march on Sofia, the Bulgarian capital. The following day, the Turks violated their armistice with Bulgaria and entered Thrace. The Greeks and the Serbs launched a general offensive on July 15, and the Turks reoccupied Adrianople on July 22. With enemy columns converging on Sofia, the Bulgarians bowed to the inevitable. On July 30, they concluded an armistice to end hostilities, and a peace treaty was signed between the combatants on August 10, 1913. Under the terms of the treaty, Greece and Serbia divided most of Macedonia between themselves, leaving Bulgaria with only a small part of the region.<sup>4</sup>



*Balkan Wars. Encyclopedia Britannica.*

Kosovo was annexed by Serbia in 1912 during the First Balkan War; it may be observed as the de facto end of the Ottoman rule of Kosovo. The annexation of Kosovo was formalised in 1913 during the Treaty of London, by which the Ottoman Empire formally renounced its sovereignty over Kosovo. Eventually, the international community recognised the territory as a part of Serbia.

Even in the early years of the XX century, Albanians were systematically confronted with new Serb programs, which went to extremes, wanting to destroy an entire nation. The Serbian regime pursued a hegemonic and destructive policy towards the Albanians. They burned the villages, massacred the population, looted the means and the property of the Albanians. In his platform regarding Kosovo and the Albanians during the years 1912-1915, Ilia Garashanin presented his basic thesis in what can be considered a purely chauvinist project titled “Naçertania”. He presented a key principle: *Serbization at any cost*. In this context, the *Serbian Police Inspector in Skopje, Mihailo Cerović*, threatened the Albanians that he “will cut off their legs and heads if they do not become Serbs”. The aim of the Serbian policy in Kosovo was the political and economic oppression of the Albanians, to expel them from their homeland, Kosovo, and to establish a Serb colony, in order to realise this platform. Through calls, the Serbian government openly demanded in front of the then-international opinion that the Albanians be liquidated as the nations of North Africa were liquidated. Above all, they managed to justify themselves and be accepted in the eyes of the powers of the time, especially in the London conference (1912-1913), where they managed to extend their rule over the occupied Albanian lands.

During this time, the Serbian nationalist imagination goes beyond reason and human belief: “*Several generations of Albanians must die to forget what the Serbs did to them.*” With this idea from 1912 to the end of 1913, over 120,000 Albanians were executed in various forms, and about 50,000 others moved towards Turkey. Additionally, by Serbian and Montenegrin forces, 235 Albanian villages were completely burned from 1912 to 1914. During this time (1912-1915), as in the Sandzak of Nis, in 1878, after the departure of the Albanians from Kosovo, the colonisation of Albanian lands with the Slavic element.

This anti-Albanian policy had continued even after the end of the First World War, when Kosovo was reconquered by the army of the Serbo-Croatian-Slovenian Kingdom, which did not reduce the violence against Kosovo Albanians, but continued their annihilation without interruption and with a constant rhythm. Thus, between the two world wars, under constant pressure, the Albanian nation faced the idea of dismantling the Albanian nation in the Balkan way “*through imprisonment, violence and murder, adding the psychosis of fear in every aspect, for the final solution of this issue.*” Moreover, as a result of these repressive measures, during this time began the expulsion of Albanians to Turkey.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Zhitia, S. (2020). The Anti-Albanian Policy of the Serbian State, Prograunitaryms and Methods (XIX-XX). *JOURNAL OF HISTORY AND FUTURE*, 7(2), 691–710.

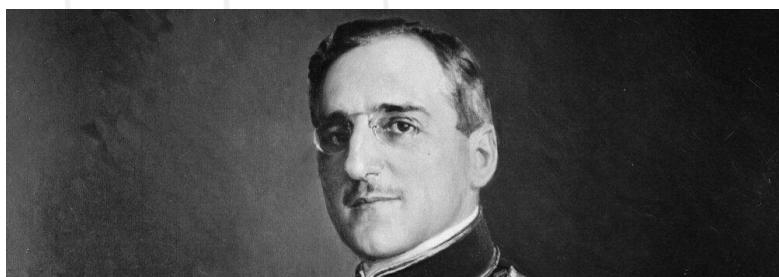
#### 4.1.2 The Formation of the Yugoslav State

The State of Yugoslavia was founded in 1918, as a consequence of World War I, under the name ‘*Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes*’ (renamed as ‘*Kingdom of Yugoslavia*’ in 1929). In essence, it was a result of ‘Realpolitik’—the Kingdom of Serbia, as the main Balkan ally of the victorious *Entente*, was enlarged by the southern Slav territories that had been ruled formerly by the *Austro-Hungarian* monarchy (except Istria and parts of the Dalmatian coast, as well as Carinthia). Although formally declared as the joint State of all the southern Slavic peoples, in its core, it proved to be an enlarged Serbian State. Serbia conceived itself as some form of a Balkan ‘*Piedmont*’, with the mission *to unify all southern Slavs in a unitary State under Serbian predominance*—although the new State in reality was a multiethnic puzzle, with a sample of divergent peoples integrated into one State. *Some 80% of its population were Slavs*, albeit with very different traditions and cultures, whereas some 20% comprised large German and Hungarian populations in the newly acquired Northern territories, and with *Albanians, Turks, Gypsies, and Vlachs* in its South.

Nevertheless, the new State perceived itself as a ‘*national state*’ of southern Slavs according to the French model. The Constitution of 1921 was based on the fundamental principles of national unitarianism and centralism, with a strong role for the Serbian king. It was adopted—contrary to the original compromise at the time of unification of southern Slav territories—by a simple majority delivered by the votes of the Serbian members of parliament, against the votes of the main Croatian and Slovene groups. As a consequence, the State suffered from the beginning under a severe crisis of legitimacy. Combined with a system of parties based mainly on national identities, the constant crisis of legitimacy resulted in an extremely fragile and unstable polity. The new Yugoslav Kingdom accordingly moved from one constitutional crisis to another, with quickly changing governments, an extreme polarization between the governing Serbian parties and the (opposition) parties of the other nationalities, and a tendency of the unstable governments in Belgrade to take recourse in brutal uses of the military in order to suppress expressions of national discontent in the various parts of the multinational empire.

Several attempts failed to find some form of consensus on the constitutional structure of a joint State. After a protracted governmental crisis, King Alexander, in 1929, dissolved parliament, suspended the constitution, and took over the executive and legislative power. In 1931, he tried to legitimise his ‘royal dictatorship’ by a new (imposed) constitution and electoral laws severely deforming any possibility for the populace to express its political will. But all these measures only worsened the crisis of legitimacy and finally wrecked the political target of an integration of all southern Slavs into a unitarian ‘national State’.

With the so-called ‘*Sporazum*’ of 26 August 1939, Yugoslavia saw a final attempt to put the State on a new basis, trying to strike a compromise between the diverging claims of



*Yugoslavism*, Serbian nationalism, and Croatian and Slovene demands for political participation. The political compromise and the coalition government born out of it met stiff resistance from all sides. When the German army invaded Yugoslavia in 1941, the acceptance of the Yugoslav State by large segments of the population had fallen to a minimum.<sup>6</sup>

## 4.2 Occupation, Collaboration, and Resistance: The Balkans in the Second World War

### 4.2.1 Italy's Invasion of Albania

In October 1930, the Balkan states, led by Turkey, started the organisation of a *Balkan Entente (Treaty)* to ensure common borders. The pact was signed in 1934 between *Greece, Turkey, Romania* and *Yugoslavia* to guarantee the security of their Balkan borders. They would cooperate to protect their common interests as provided by the treaty itself, and the Balkan states would not take any initiative against any other Balkan state that was not part of the Entente. On the other hand, these four states pledged not to undertake political obligations against any other Balkan country without the consensus of the signatories. The pact would be opened to other states that would not harm any parties. Nevertheless, *Albania* stayed away from the pact because *Zogu* was interested in improving its relationship with Italy, even though a considerable number of Albanian minorities were living inside the borders of Yugoslavia. Turkey tried to include Albania in the Treaty, but in a meeting between the Turkish ambassador in Rome and Mussolini, it was harshly and automatically refused this option. Albania never showed any official request to be part of the pact, and according to the author Tomas, *Zogu* was aiming to be paid by Italy not to be included in the pact.

The exclusion of Albania from the Balkan Entente showed the world that Italy was de facto the controller of Albania and, as a consequence, of the Adriatic Sea. At this time, even the big powers, like the UK, understood that Italy had become influential in the Balkans.

Hence, the pact was a significant turning point in Italian foreign policy in the mid-30s. On one hand, Italy realised it could not cross the Albanian border to jump into the Balkans. On the other hand, *Zogu* realised how relevant he was and increased his claims for more money, for which he received further isolation in return. Moreover, the great powers like the UK realised that Italy now had possession and control of the *Adriatic Sea*, somehow with their permission.

Consequently, it changed the approach towards Yugoslavia. In 1935, the foreign minister Ciano started the negotiations for a treaty of non-attack and trade in the Adriatic. *Zogu* tried to be part of it, but Italy denied the negotiations. Such negotiations were accompanied by public declarations that the Entente was against the *League of Nations* principles and aimed to annex the Dodecanese from Greece. The idea of Italy was to confuse the Balkans and to teach *Zogu* about its reduced importance in the area.

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<sup>6</sup> Oeter, S. (2011). Yugoslavia, dissolution of. In Max Planck Encyclopedia of Public International Law. Oxford University Press.

Nevertheless, Mussolini was manipulating international public opinion on the peace in the Balkans because, in 1935, he occupied Ethiopia. In addition, in 1937, he made a gentlemen's agreement with London to keep the peace in the Mediterranean Sea. In the same year, it signed an agreement with Turkey, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia and tried to do the same with France. However, it did not accept the recognition of the Italian Empire's expansion in Africa. After the occupation of Ethiopia, the League of Nations undertook sanctions against Italy, which Albania voted against. At this point, Zogu was isolated from the great powers, as the British ambassador argued in a meeting in Sofia when he was asked to support Albania with a friendship treaty.

In 1937, Italy concluded an economic treaty with Yugoslavia, where it recognised the Empire of Italy over Ethiopia and where the two states also engaged in defending the common borders over the Adriatic Sea. Moreover, Italy started to negotiate by signing agreements with Turkey and Bulgaria, and it seemed like it was hoping for peaceful relations in the Balkans. However, the situation changed with the seizure of power by Hitler in Germany. Mussolini extended his ambitions with Mare Nostrum, intending to develop his imperialism in the African continent.<sup>7</sup>

On 7 April, Italian troops disembarked in Albania, facing little opposition, while Zog fled the country. Days later, a collection of pro-Italian Albanians under Ciano's guidance granted the country to Vittorio Emanuele III, who subsequently ruled through a viceroy, Francesco Jacomoni. This odd legal situation ostensibly asserted the continued integrity and sovereignty of the Albanian nation while effectively rendering it a protectorate. The Albanians enjoyed their own government and ministries, although decisions were subject to Italian approval. Albanian ministers were supervised and ultimately subservient to Italian permanent advisers. This legal duality was mirrored by an ideological one.

With control over the country, Italians felt comfortable encouraging Albanian nationalism, though within certain limits. Italians hoped that developing parallel versions of their core fascist institutions, most notably an Albanian Fascist Party, would forge an Albanian nationalist subjectivity favourable to membership in an Italian empire. Consequently, the Italians aimed to generate consensus and support from Albanian nationalists. This policy allowed Albanian nationalists a certain leeway in pursuing their goals within the context of the Italian occupation and the fascist ideology it intended to export.

Jacomoni and company aimed to straddle several possibly conflicting interests while governing Albania. First, Albania was an imperial possession meant to strengthen Italy's economic and geostrategic position. Second, the Italian administration would highlight the universalism of imperial fascism to Albanians and foreign observers. In this sense, Albania was a test site for what Reto Hofmann has called fascism's alleged ability to foster capitalist development with internal social peace through a disciplined politics of nationalism. Third, Italy

<sup>7</sup> Bedini, B. (2024). Italian Foreign Policy between Albania and the Balkans (1910-1939). *Interdisciplinary Journal of Research and Development*, 11(1), 111.

would have to balance a plethora of Albanian interest groups. Large landowners were embraced rather than erased through land redistribution. Without a socio-economic revolution, many poor and rural Albanians would have to content themselves with the ‘development’ typical of interwar imperialism, a higher possibility of accessing education, transportation infrastructure and medical assistance. The nationalist elites and middle classes willing to work with Italy were split between those who had opposed Zog and those who had supported him. Italy tried to appeal to both, which created inevitable tensions. More radical nationalists also hoped to leverage the Italian empire into Albanian irredentist expansionism at the expense of Balkan neighbours. Upon entry into the Second World War, Italy sought to justify its own expansionist agenda through Albanian claims while ensuring that a ‘Greater Modern Albania’ coincided with Italian interests. Finally, Albanian nationalists increasingly chafed at their institutional lack of power and poor quotidian treatment by Italians, as well as at the corruption and incompetence of Italian officials tasked with running their country.

At first, Italy pursued these goals by investing heavily in Albanian modernisation while restructuring Albanian society along fascist lines. But these policies lasted only 14 months before the war significantly reduced Italian investment capacity. The invasion of Greece in October 1940 infamously unravelled, heightening distrust between Italians and Albanians. By the time Germany bailed Italy out in April 1941, Jacomoni was prepared to concede more power to the nationalists. Yet these reforms were too little too late, as all but the most loyal Albanians had lost any faith they had in Italy. Nationalist and communist groups emerged as Italian authority declined, ultimately leading to the Italian exit from the country in September 1943. Despite the Italian failure, we should not analyse the occupation teleologically as destined to end with the triumph of Albanian sovereignty. Albanian actors had to keep in mind several possible futures – and Italy played a considerable role in many of these. Negotiation was as important as resistance in these years. Now we can turn to examples of these negotiations over Albanian political subjectivity in concrete and specific transnational cases.<sup>8</sup>

#### 4.2.2 Germany’s Invasion of Yugoslavia

On March 25, 1941, Yugoslavia joined the Axis and agreed to permit transit through its territory to German troops headed for Greece. The immediate reason for the Axis invasion of Yugoslavia was the Yugoslav government’s announcement that it would not honour its obligations under the agreement.

The debate over signing the Tripartite Pact that bound the Axis partners had bitterly divided the Yugoslav federal government. Prince Paul had pushed hard for it and had prevailed. The announcement of the agreement on March 25 was extremely unpopular in many parts of the country, particularly in Serbia and Montenegro. On March 27, Serb military officers overthrew the regency, placed the 17-year-old King Peter on the throne and denounced the previous

<sup>8</sup> Lang, A. (2024). Fascist transnationalism during the occupation of Albania (1939–43). *Modern Italy*, 29(4), 426–440.

government's decision to join the Axis. Although the new prime minister, Colonel Dusan Simovic, sought within days to retract this statement, Hitler was furious and ordered the invasion of Yugoslavia on the evening of March 27.<sup>9</sup>

On 6 April 1941, the German Army, supported by *Hungarian* and *Bulgarian* forces, attacked *Yugoslavia* and *Greece*. Hitler launched the assault in order to overthrow the recently established pro-Allied government in Yugoslavia and to support Italy's stalled invasion of Greece, which had been launched in October 1940.

The operation would secure Germany's Balkan flank ahead of the planned *invasion of the Soviet Union* - scheduled for Spring 1941 - and safeguard its Romanian oil supplies from possible Allied air attack. Possession of the southern Balkans, commanding as they did the eastern Mediterranean, would also allow Germany to attack British lines of communications with the East.

The Axis powers then partitioned Yugoslavia:

1. *Germany* annexed northern and eastern Slovenia, occupied the Serb Banat, which had a significant ethnic German minority, and established a military occupation administration in Serbia proper, based in Belgrade.

2. *Italy* annexed southern and eastern Slovenia, occupied the Yugoslav coastline along the Adriatic Sea (including Montenegro) and attached Kosovo-Metohija to Albania, which Italy had annexed in April 1939.

3. Under Ante Pavelic as Poglavnik (Leader), the Ustaše proclaimed an "*Independent State of Croatia*," sponsored by Germany and Italy, which annexed *Bosnia-Herzegovina*. Despite the country's claim to be independent, Germany and Italy divided Croatia into zones of influence, in which each stationed troop.

4. *Hungary* annexed the Backa and Baranja regions in northeastern Yugoslavia.

5. *Bulgaria* occupied Macedonia and the tiny Serb province of Pirot.<sup>10</sup>

#### 4.2.3 Kosovo During the War Years

After the Axis powers occupied Yugoslavia in 1941, Kosovo was united with neighbouring Albania under Italian control. Kosovar Albanians then drove out or killed thousands of the interwar Serb colonists.<sup>11</sup>

During the Italian occupation of Albania, the prime minister, Shefqet Verlaci, approved the possible administrative union of Albania and Italy, because he wanted Italian support for the

<sup>9</sup> *War in the Balkans, 1941-45*. (n.d.). National Army Museum.

<sup>10</sup> Axis Invasion of Yugoslavia | Holocaust Encyclopedia. (n.d.). Holocaust Encyclopedia.

<sup>11</sup> Allcock, J.B., Lampe, J.R., Young, A. (2025, December 30). Kosovo. Encyclopedia Britannica

union of Kosovo, Chameria and other "Albanian irredentism" into *Greater Albania*. Indeed, this unification was realised after the Axis occupation of Yugoslavia and Greece in the spring of 1941. The Albanian fascists claimed in May 1941 that nearly all the Albanian-populated territories were united to Albania.

Between May 1941 and September 1943, Benito Mussolini placed nearly all territory inhabited by ethnic Albanians under a quisling Albanian government. That included parts of Kosovo, parts of Vardar Macedonia, and some border areas of Montenegro. In Chameria, an Albanian high commissioner, *Xhemil Dino*, was appointed by the Italians, but the area remained under the control of the Italian military command in Athens, and so technically remained a region of Greece.

With the retreat of Axis forces in 1944, ethnic Albanians who wanted Kosovo to remain united with Albania staged a revolt, which was crushed by the Partisan army of Yugoslavia's new communist government. The postwar government of the new federal Yugoslavia granted Kosovo the status of an autonomous region (and later autonomous province) within the republic of Serbia, but it also continued to suppress nationalist sentiments among Kosovar Albanians.<sup>12</sup>

#### 4.2.4 The Liberation of Yugoslavia

In June 1941, Yugoslav communists were ordered to mount attacks against Axis units. Under the direction of the party leader, Josip Broz Tito, Partisan detachments conducted small-scale sabotage until September 1941, when they occupied the Serbian town of Užice and proclaimed a liberated Užice Republic. The Partisans' clear intent to go beyond national liberation to create a socialist federation alienated them from the Chetniks, who were mostly Serbian soldiers loyal to the exiled king. The two forces also fell out over atrocities committed by the Germans in reprisal for acts of resistance; the Chetniks wished to avoid provoking such atrocities, but Tito calculated that they would drive yet more people into the resistance. Even after the Partisans were forced to retreat into the mountains of Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina, they attracted enough recruits to designate themselves the People's Liberation Army (PLA), with elite Proletarian Brigades selected for their fighting abilities, ideological commitment, and all-Yugoslav character. In November 1942, Tito demonstrated the strength of his movement by convening the Anti-Fascist Council for the National Liberation of Yugoslavia, which eventually became a provisional government.

Fearful that a powerful resistance force might encourage the Allies to invade the Balkan Peninsula, the Germans and Italians led seven major offensives against the PLA. The turning point of the war came in May 1943, when Partisans escaped encirclement in Herzegovina by forcing an exit up the Sutjeska Gorge. The battle of Sutjeska was of first importance in persuading the Allies to switch their support from the royalists to the communists. Anglo-American and Soviet arms and equipment thenceforth were supplied in ever-increasing

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<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*

amounts. The Italian surrender in the fall of 1943 relieved the military pressure on the Partisans, who also benefited from the capture of considerable supplies of munitions and equipment. By the end of 1943, the PLA had grown to an estimated 300,000 troops and had diverted a significant number of enemy forces from other Allied fronts. In October 1944, Partisans took part in the liberation of Belgrade by the Soviet Red Army; they were then able to focus their campaigns against the Chetniks and other Yugoslav collaborators. Reprisals against fleeing anti-Partisan forces were especially brutal in northern Yugoslavia.<sup>13</sup>

After the surrender of the Yugoslav royal army in April 1941, Serb soldiers throughout Yugoslavia set up čete, or “bands,” named after armed irregulars who had harassed the Turks in the 19th century. The most important were those organised in the Ravna Gora district of western Serbia under Colonel Dragoljub (Draža) Mihailović. Mihailović directed his units to avoid large-scale fighting with the Germans (who exacted horrible reprisals for every act of resistance) and to wait for an Allied invasion that would liberate Yugoslavia and restore the monarchy. This cautious strategy soon led the Chetniks into open conflict with the Partisans. Even after the Germans drove both forces out of Serbia, many Chetniks occasionally joined German, Italian, and Croatian units in operations against their communist rivals. The Allies, who at first considered Mihailović the pillar of the Yugoslav resistance, eventually shifted their support to the Partisans. By the end of the war, the Chetniks were greatly reduced in number. Some retreated north to surrender to Anglo-American forces; Mihailović and his few remaining followers tried to fight their way back to the Ravna Gora to continue the anticommunist struggle, but they were beaten and dispersed by the victorious Partisans. In March 1946, Mihailović was captured and brought to Belgrade, where he was tried and executed.<sup>14</sup>

Socialist Yugoslavia was formed in 1946 after Josip Broz Tito and his communist-led Partisans had helped liberate the country from German rule in 1944–45. This second Yugoslavia covered much the same territory as its predecessor, with the addition of land acquired from Italy in Istria and Dalmatia. The kingdom was replaced by a federation of six nominally equal republics: Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Macedonia. In Serbia, the two provinces of Kosovo and Vojvodina were given autonomous status in order to acknowledge the specific interests of Albanians and Magyars, respectively.<sup>15</sup>

#### 4.2.5 The Liberation of Albania

During the Axis-formed government, the various communist groups that had germinated in Zog’s Albania merged in November 1941 to form the Albanian Communist Party and began to fight the occupiers as a unified resistance force. After a successful struggle against the fascists and two other resistance groups that contended with them for power—the National Front (Balli Kombëtar) and the pro-Zog Legality Party (Legaliteti)—the communists seized control of the

<sup>13</sup> Britannica Editors (2025, February 1). *Partisan*. *Encyclopedia Britannica*.

<sup>14</sup> Britannica Editors (2025, February 21). *Chetnik*. *Encyclopedia Britannica*.

<sup>15</sup> Allcock, J.B., Lampe, J.R. (2025, December 7). *Yugoslavia*. *Encyclopedia Britannica*.

country on November 29, 1944. Enver Hoxha, a college instructor who had led the resistance struggle of communist forces, became the leader of Albania by virtue of his post as secretary-general of the party. Albania, which before the war had been under the personal dictatorship of King Zog, now fell under the collective dictatorship of the Albanian Communist Party. In 1946, the country officially became the People's Republic of Albania.<sup>16</sup>

Enver Hoxha was the prime minister of Albania from its liberation in 1944 until 1954, simultaneously holding the ministry of foreign affairs from 1946 to 1953. As first secretary of the Party of Labour's Central Committee, he retained effective control of the government until his death.

Albania's economy was revolutionised under Hoxha's long rule. Farmland was confiscated from wealthy landowners and gathered into collective farms that eventually enabled Albania to become almost completely self-sufficient in food crops. Industry, which had previously been almost non-existent, received huge amounts of investment, so that by the 1980s it had grown to contribute more than half of the gross national product. Electricity was brought to every rural district, epidemics of disease were stamped out, and illiteracy became a thing of the past.

In order to enforce his radical program, however, Hoxha resorted to brutal Stalinist tactics. His government imprisoned, executed, or exiled thousands of landowners, rural clan leaders, Muslim and Christian clerics, peasants who resisted collectivisation, and disloyal party officials. Private property was confiscated by the state; all churches, mosques, and other religious institutions were closed; and all cultural and intellectual endeavours were put at the service of socialism and the state.

As ardent a nationalist as he was a communist, Hoxha excoriated any communist state that threatened his power or the sovereignty of Albania. In 1948, he broke relations with Yugoslavia and formed an alliance with the Soviet Union. After the death of the Soviet leader Joseph Stalin, for whom Hoxha held a lifelong admiration, his relations with Nikita Khrushchev deteriorated until Hoxha broke with him completely in 1961. He then forged close ties with China, breaking with that country in turn in 1978 after the death of Mao Zedong and China's rapprochement with the West. From then on, Hoxha spurned all the world's major powers, declaring that Albania would become a model socialist republic on its own.

In order to ensure the succession of a younger generation of leaders, Hoxha in 1981 ordered the execution of several leading party and government officials.

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<sup>16</sup> Biberaj, E., Prifti, P.R. (2026, January 2). *Albania*. *Encyclopedia Britannica*.

Thereafter, he withdrew into semi-retirement, turning over most state functions to Ramiz Alia, who succeeded him upon his death.<sup>17</sup>

## 4.3 Autonomy Under Control: Kosovo in Tito's Socialist Yugoslavia (1945–1980)

### 4.3.1 The Political and Administrative Structure of Socialist Yugoslavia

Despite the federal form of Yugoslavia, the new state was at first highly centralised both politically and economically, with power held firmly by Tito's Communist Party of Yugoslavia and a constitution closely modelled on that of the Soviet Union. In 1953, 1963, and 1974, however, a succession of new constitutions created an ever more loosely coordinated union, the locus of power being steadily shifted downward from the federal level to economic enterprises, municipalities, and republic-level apparatuses of the Communist Party (renamed the League of Communists of Yugoslavia). Throughout this complex evolution, the Yugoslav system consisted of three levels of government: the communes (opštine), the republics, and the federation. The 500 communes were direct agents for the collection of most government revenue, and they also provided social services.

Under the constitution of 1974, the assemblies of the communes, republics, and autonomous provinces consisted of three chambers. The Chamber of Associated Labour was formed from delegations representing self-managing work organisations; the Chamber of Local Communities consisted of citizens drawn from territorial constituencies; and the Sociopolitical Chamber was elected from members of the Socialist Alliance of the Working People of Yugoslavia, the League of Communists, the trade unions, and organisations of war veterans, women, and youth. The federal assembly (Skupština) had only two chambers: the Federal Chamber, consisting of 220 delegates from work organisations, communes, and sociopolitical bodies; and the Chamber of Republics and Provinces, containing 88 delegates from republican and provincial assemblies.

The executive functions of government were carried out by the Federal Executive Council, which consisted of the president, members representing the republics and provinces, and officials representing various administrative agencies. In 1974, the presidency of the federation was vested for life in Tito; following his death in 1980, it was transferred to an unwieldy rotating collective presidency of regional representatives.

After 1945, the communist government nationalised large landholdings, industrial enterprises, public utilities, and other resources and launched a strenuous process of industrialisation. After a split with the Soviet Union in 1948, Yugoslavia had by the 1960s come

<sup>17</sup> Britannica Editors (2025, October 12). *Enver Hoxha*. Encyclopedia Britannica.

to place greater reliance on market mechanisms. A distinctive feature of this new “Yugoslav system” was “workers’ self-management,” which reached its fullest form in the 1976 Law on Associated Labour. Under this law, individuals participated in Yugoslav enterprise management through the work organisations into which they were divided. Work organisations might be either “Basic Organizations of Associated Labour” (the subdivisions of a single enterprise) or “Complex Organizations of Associated Labour” uniting different segments of an overall activity (e.g., manufacture and distribution). Each work organisation was governed by a workers’ council, which elected a board of management to run the enterprise. Managers were nominally the servants of the workers’ councils, although in practice their training and access to information and other resources gave them a significant advantage over ordinary workers.

Under the new system, remarkable growth was achieved between 1953 and 1965, but development subsequently slowed. In the absence of real stimulus to efficiency, workers’ councils often raised wage levels above the true earning capacities of their organisations, usually with the connivance of local banks and political officials. Inflation and unemployment emerged as serious problems, particularly during the 1980s, and productivity remained low. Such defects in the system were patched over by massive and uncoordinated foreign borrowing, but after 1983, the International Monetary Fund demanded extensive economic restructuring as a precondition for further support. The conflict over how to meet this demand resurrected old animosities between the wealthier northern and western regions, which were required to contribute funds to federally administered development programs, and the poorer southern and eastern regions, where these funds were frequently invested in relatively inefficient enterprises or in unproductive prestige projects. Such differences contributed directly to the disintegration of the second Yugoslavia.<sup>18</sup>

Unlike the majority of other Eastern European nations, Yugoslav Partisans liberated their country with only minimal help from the Soviet Red Army and Western allies. This led the Yugoslav communist authorities to believe that, contrary to other countries in Eastern Europe, they should be entitled to follow a more independent socialist course. Unlike other communist parties in the region, the Communist Party of Yugoslavia was able to rely on the local army, police, and relatively high legitimacy among diverse Yugoslav demographic groups. Yugoslavia did not perceive itself as a client, but as a partner of the USSR, and in many respects pursued its own domestic and foreign policy, which sometimes was more assertive than Moscow’s policy. This was the case concerning the issue of the Free Territory of Trieste, Balkan Federation, Greek Civil War, Austro-Slovene conflict in Carinthia and infiltration and relations with the Albanian National Liberation Movement. Belgrade’s independent policies raised tensions with Moscow and escalated in the 1948 Tito–Stalin split when Yugoslavia found itself isolated from the rest of the Eastern Bloc countries and in need to redefine its foreign policy.

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<sup>18</sup> Allcock, J.B., Lampe, J.R. (2025, December 7). Yugoslavia. Encyclopedia Britannica.

The country initially oriented itself towards the Western Bloc and signed the 1953 Balkan Pact with the NATO member states of the Kingdom of Greece and Turkey. After the death of Stalin, Yugoslav relations with the USSR improved with the country's verbal support for the Soviet intervention in Hungary (contrary to the 1968 one in Czechoslovakia). The 1955 Belgrade declaration decreased reliance on the 1953 Balkan Pact, which subsequently discontinued its activities. As the country still wanted to preserve its newly gained independence, it developed relations with European neutral countries such as Finland. It also avoided joining the Warsaw Pact established in May 1955. Yet in order to avoid isolation in deeply divided Europe, Yugoslavia looked for new allies among former colonies and mandate territories. Yugoslavia supported Egypt during the Suez Crisis, a country which became one of the founding members of the Non-Aligned Movement. Yugoslavia developed its relations with India, another founding member, from the time of their concurrent mandate at the UN Security Council from the end of 1949 onward.<sup>19</sup>

#### 4.3.2 Social and Demographic Transformation in Kosovo

After the Second World War and the Yugoslavia-Albania split, Yugoslav authorities attempted to downplay links between Albanians of Albania and Kosovo and to implement a policy of "*Turkification*" that encouraged Turkish language education and emigration to Turkey among Albanians. In 1953, an agreement was reached between *Tito* and *Mehmet Fuat Köprülü*, the foreign minister of Turkey, that promoted the emigration of Albanians to Anatolia.

Forced migration to Turkey increased, and numbers cited by Klejda Mulaj for 1953–1957 are 195,000 Albanians leaving Yugoslavia, and for 1966, some 230,000 people. Historian Noel Malcolm placed the number of Albanians leaving for Turkey at 100,000 between 1953 and 1966. Factors involved in the upsurge of migration were intimidation and pressure toward the Albanian population to leave through a campaign headed by Yugoslav police chief Aleksandar Ranković that was officially stated as aimed at curbing Albanian nationalism. Kosovo under the control of Ranković was viewed by Turkey as the individual who would implement "the Gentleman's Agreement".<sup>20</sup>

At the same time, a new phase of colonisation occurred in the region as Montenegrin and Serb families were installed in Kosovo. The situation ended in 1966 with the removal of Ranković from his position. From 1961 to 1981, the ethnic Albanian population of Kosovo almost doubled as a result of high birth rates, illegal migration from communist Albania and

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<sup>19</sup> An almost forgotten legacy: Non-Aligned Yugoslavia in the United Nations and in the making of contemporary international law | Voices | SYLFF Official website | Cultivating Leaders of Tomorrow. (n.d.).

<sup>20</sup> Qirezi, Arben (2017). "Settling the self-determination dispute in Kosovo". In Mehmeti, Leandrit I.; Radeljić, Branislav (eds.). Kosovo and Serbia: Contested Options and Shared Consequences. University of Pittsburgh Press. pp. 51–53.

rapid urbanisation. Throughout the same period, the population of ethnic Serbs of Kosovo reduced by half, stimulated by an exodus of ethnic Serbs from the region.<sup>21</sup>

As elsewhere, the education system of Kosovo has had a long history of inseparability from the politics of the region. Between the wars, Kosovo was returned to Serb rule, and education was provided only in Serbian. Prior to the Second World War, there had been just 252 schools in Kosovo, teaching only in Serbian. By the end of 1945 there were 392 containing 392 classes in Serbian and 279 in Albanian. A survey carried out in 1948 found that 74 per cent of all Kosova Albanians over the age of 10 were illiterate; there was a shortage of professionally qualified teachers; the bare 300 Albanian school teachers employed in 1945 were supplemented by nearly 50 recruited from Albania itself. The policy was reversed in World War II when "empowered" Albanians took over Serbian schools, named them after historical figures and proceeded with education in Albanian.

During the Communist period, under the slogan "brotherhood and unity, education was provided both to Serbs and Albanians in their respective languages. In primary school, children could choose between Serbo-Croat, Albanian and Turkish as their language of instruction. From the Yugoslav point of view, following Stalin's policy of promoting national rights to placate and contain opposition, post-war Yugoslavia "allowed ethnic difference and granted extensive ethnic and cultural rights".

The curriculum was the traditional heavily loaded socialist one of up to 16 subjects until the end of secondary school, including Marxism, Defence and Protection as well as the normal maths, science, arts and physical education. However, there was a continual tension within communist ideology, between discourses of "nationalism", policies of "national affirmation" (implying learning the literature and history of Albania) and the expectation that Albanian students would learn lessons in "socialist Yugoslav patriotism". History was considered the principal subject for this nationalism, through themes such as the national liberation struggle and the figure of Tito. Lessons on the horrors of war and Nazi atrocities did take place, although it could be argued from later events that their effect on furthering peace was minimal. Islam was suppressed, with the Koranic schools abolished, and the teaching of children in mosques was made a criminal offence in 1952.

Nonetheless, there was a perceived growth in Albanian national identity, not only in terms of opposition to Serbs, but also in terms of fraternity with Albanians in Albania. The mutual fears of a Greater Serbia and a Greater Albania must be seen as constant undercurrents to political and educational activism in the region. Differential birth rates, and therefore a decline in the proportion of the Serbian population in Kosovo, were seen by Serbs as a threat to their dominance, and even as a deliberate move to wrest Kosovo from Serbia. However, in his book on the history of Kosovo, Noel Malcolm, while acknowledging the high birth rates of Albanians,

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<sup>21</sup> Mulaj, Klejda (2008). *Polities of ethnic cleansing: nation-state building and provision of in/security in twentieth-century Balkans*. Lexington Books. p. 139

shows that this varies between urban and rural areas. The myth that Albanians breed as part of a political campaign is disproved, in that urban, low birth rate couples are more likely to be politicised than their counterparts in remote villages.

A period of rapprochement between Yugoslavia and Albania from 1968 benefited Kosovars. A decision was made in late 1969 that the handful of higher education "facilities", set up as offshoots of the University of Belgrade, should be converted and expanded into a fully-fledged University of Pristina, with teaching in Albanian as well as Serbo-Croat. Within 10 years, the number of students attending was estimated at 30,000, studying under more than 1,000 lecturers. The proportion of ethnic Albanians among Kosovo's student population rose between 1968 and 1978 from 38 per cent to 72 per cent. This was mirrored in the increasing Albanization of the Party, of local administration, the police and other security forces. By 1980, there were 36,000 full-time students, and an additional 18,000 in extension study programmes. The doors of education were wide open, in part as a stopgap to the unemployment problem and to stop youth from roaming the streets. Consequently, Kosova had the highest ratio of students in the country: 274.4 per 1,000 inhabitants, compared with 194.9 for the Yugoslav national average and 165.7 for Slovenia, the most advanced republic in the Federation.

From the mid-1960s, however, the Yugoslav government followed policies that acknowledged Albanian ethnic identity and enabled Albanians to advance in provincial and federal administrations. This "Albanization" of the province was also stimulated by the increasing departure of Serbs for Serbia proper. As a result of Serb migration and higher Albanian birth rates, the Albanian share of the population rose from half in 1946 to three-fourths in 1981 and to four-fifths in 1991, by which time the proportion of Serbs had fallen to less than one-fifth.

#### **4.3.3 Early Tensions and Protest Movements**

On the night of 2 June 1968, students at the Belgrade University initiated a seven-day strike. The police responded by beating the student protestors and banning all public gatherings. Ignoring the ban, the student protestors then gathered at the Faculty of Philosophy, held debates and speeches on social justice, and distributed copies of the banned magazine *Student*. Students also protested against economic reforms, which led to high unemployment and workers leaving the country and finding work elsewhere. In Ljubljana, more than 5000 people gathered on Prešern Square. They were violently dispersed by police units from Croatia using batons, tear gas and water canons. Hundreds were injured. Leading public figures, including film director Dušan Makavejev, stage actor Stevo Žigon, poet Desanka Maksimović, and numerous university professors, lent their support to the protests and, in so doing, found themselves running into problems in their careers because of their connections to the protests.

President Josip Broz Tito gave a televised speech on June 9, which ultimately led to the cessation of the protests, as he conceded that the "students are right" and gave in to some of their

demands. However, in the years that followed, he retaliated against the leaders of the protests by imprisoning students (Vladimir Mijanović, Milan Nikolić, Pavluško Imširović, Lazar Stojanović and others) and by firing critical professors from university positions and Communist party posts.

Despite the consistent decentralisation of the Yugoslavian system, the distribution of political power and social resources remained uneven, notably in Kosovo, which continued to remain among the most underdeveloped regions of the Yugoslav federation. Even though Kosovo was constitutionally defined as an autonomous state (or province) within the federation, it lacked the political authority, institutional capacity, and many economic infrastructures compared to the other regions, especially Serbia. Regions with Albanian-majority populations had to face persistent disadvantages in higher education, political representation, and public employment, caused by the fact that decision-making authorities are most likely to be exercised by republican or federal institutions rather than the local bodies. By the late 1960s, inequalities had generated growing frustration among the Albanians, notably among the younger and educated Albanians, who were increasingly aware of the gap between Yugoslavia's commitment to equality and their experience within the federation.

In November 1968, following the global student uprisings around the world, mostly the demonstrations started in the Belgrade university, the tensions peaked, and mass demonstrations began in Pristina, quickly spreading to other Albanian majority towns. The protest, driven by the students in the first place, soon attracted a large number of people and transformed into a wider political mobilisation. The demonstrations began to transform from immediate socio-economic grievances and were framed in the claims of Albanians in political and national terms. Calls for the federal state to provide greater cultural recognition, official use of the Albanian language, and to meet their ambitious demands for Kosovo's political status. The demands did not remain in Kosovo. Instead, it evolved both the Yugoslav and the Albanian political overviews regarding the formal status of Kosovo, and the Albanians living in Yugoslavia.

The Yugoslav authorities have responded to the protests through repression and accommodation. The security forces were deployed to suppress demonstrations and detained the participants. Yet, the federal authorities have acknowledged that the unrest was reflecting the systemic shortcomings rather than isolated disturbances regarding the Albanians in Kosovo. Through the following years, a series of institutional and constitutional adjustments and reforms in language, education, rights, and provincial governance have been made, expanding the federal rights of Kosovo and strengthening its autonomy in the federal structure.

Kosovo remained part of the Serbian Republic but was elevated to a full constitutive element of the Federation with its own constitution and assembly. It was also given a separate representation in the Federal Chamber of the Yugoslav Assembly, a separate seat on the Yugoslav collective presidency, and equal status in most areas of economic decision-making. In addition, Kosovo was granted its own education system, national bank and supreme court, and the right to

observe Islamic holy days. The new constitution also gave equal status to the Albanian language, enabling Albanian literature and culture to flourish.<sup>22</sup>

A policy of positive discrimination in favour of the Kosovar Albanian population was adopted to ensure that ethnic representation in the public sector reflected the ethnic balance in the republic. However, the 1974 constitution was essentially unsatisfactory to both communities in Kosovo as it failed to satisfy the Kosovar Albanians' demand for a separate republic and fostered a sense of insecurity and separation from Serbia among the Kosovo Serbs.<sup>23</sup>

Despite the extensive autonomy granted under the constitution, Kosovo was not given the legal status of a fully-fledged Republic. The reason for this rests with the nature of the Yugoslav federal system, which differentiated between nations and nationalities. Malcolm defines the difference in the following way:

*"A nation [in Serbian: narod] was potentially a state-forming unit...and therefore retained some ultimate right of secession when it formed a republic in a federation. A nationality [in Serbian: narodnost], on the other hand, was a displaced bit of a nation, the main part of which lived elsewhere: it could not be a constituent nation in a federation and could not have a federal unit of its own. The Kosovo Albanians were a nationality, because the 'nation' of Albanians had its own state in Albania."*

There was also a fear within the Yugoslav leadership that granting Kosovo republican status could provoke unrest in Serbia and among the Serb population in Kosovo itself.

Although the reforms that the Yugoslav state made in the 1974 constitution were not exactly what the protests demonstrated. The demonstrations have shown the problems of the Yugoslav federal system regarding the identity and inequality of Kosovo Albanians.

#### 4.4 From Crisis to Nationalism: The Collapse of Balance After Tito (1980–1989)

##### 4.4.1 Economic and Political Decline

The oil crisis of the 1970s magnified the economic problems, the foreign debt grew at an annual rate of 20%, and by the early 1980s, it reached more than US\$20 billion. Governments of Milka Planinc and Branko Mikulić renegotiated the foreign debt at the price of introducing the policy of stabilisation, which in practice consisted of severe austerity measures—the so-called shock treatment. During the 1980s, Yugoslav population endured the introduction of fuel limitations (40 litres per car per month), limitation of car usage to every other day, based on the last digit on the licence plate, severe limitations on import of goods and paying of a deposit upon

<sup>22</sup> Oeter, S. (2021). Yugoslavia, dissolution of. In A. Peters (Ed.), Max Planck Encyclopedia of Public International Law. Oxford University Press.

<sup>23</sup> House of Commons Library. (1998). Kosovo (Research Paper 98/73). House of Commons.

leaving the country (mostly to go shopping), to be returned in a year (with rising inflation, this effectively amounted to a fee on travel). There were shortages of coffee, chocolate and washing powder. During several dry summers, the government, unable to borrow to import electricity, was forced to introduce power cuts. On May 12, 1982, the board of the International Monetary Fund approved enhanced surveillance of Yugoslavia, to include Paris Club creditors.

In the 1980s, the Yugoslav economy entered a period of continuous crisis. Between 1979 and 1985 the Yugoslav dinar plunged from 15 to 1,370 to the U.S. dollar, half of the income from exports was used to service the debt, while real net personal income declined by 19.5%.

Year	Debt	Inflation	GDP (billion US\$) <sup>[51]</sup>	Average annual growth considering USD inflation <sup>[52]</sup>	Unemployment
1954	\$400 million <sup>[53]</sup>				
1965	\$1.2 billion <sup>[54]</sup>	34.6% <sup>[55]</sup>		9.11%	6.6% <sup>[56]</sup>
1971	\$3.177 billion <sup>[54]</sup>		15.8 (20.11%)	12.95%	6.7% <sup>[57]</sup>
1973	\$4.7 billion <sup>[58]</sup>	20% <sup>[59]</sup>	21.5 (21.86%)	17.75%	9.1% <sup>[56]</sup> or 8.1% <sup>[57]</sup>
1980	\$18.9 billion <sup>[58]</sup>	27% <sup>[60]</sup>	70.0 (27%)	12.13%	13.8% <sup>[56]</sup>
1982	\$20 billion <sup>[61]</sup>	40% <sup>[62]</sup>	62.8 (31.85%)	-7.07%	14.4% <sup>[56]</sup>
1987	\$21.961 billion <sup>[54]</sup>	167% <sup>[63]</sup>	84.6 (25.96%)	-1.4%	16.1% <sup>[56]</sup>

Table SEQ Table 1\* ARABIC 1:: Macroeconomic Parameters of Yugoslavia

Unemployment rose to 1.3 million jobseekers, and internal debt was estimated at \$40 billion.

Yugoslavia took on a number of International Monetary Fund (IMF) loans and subsequently fell into heavy debt. By 1981, it had incurred \$18.9 billion in foreign debt. In fact, Yugoslavia's debt was just 20.11% of GDP in 1971, which is, when compared with the UK (67.95%), the US (46.64%), West Germany (17.87%), and Italy (41.46%), a comparatively low rate. However, Yugoslavia's main concern was unemployment. In 1980, the unemployment rate was at 13.8%, not counting around 1 million workers employed abroad. Deteriorating living conditions during the 1980s caused the Yugoslav unemployment rate to reach 17 per cent, while another 20 per cent were underemployed. 60% of the unemployed were under the age of 25.

By 1988, emigrant remittances to Yugoslavia totalled over \$4.5 billion (USD), and by 1989 remittances were \$6.2 billion (USD), which amounted to over 19% of the world's total. A large portion of those remittances came from Yugoslav professional and skilled workers employed by Yugoslav engineering and construction firms with contracts abroad, including large infrastructure projects in the Middle East, Africa and Europe. In the early 1980s, Yugoslav firm Energoprojekt was building dams, roads and apartment houses in Iraq, Libya and Kuwait. But during the recession of the early 1980s, many oil-exporting countries reduced construction

projects as oil prices fell. Increased competition from countries like South Korea, offering less expensive labour, also contributed to a decline in Yugoslavia's booming engineering and construction export trade. In 1988, Yugoslavia owed US\$21 billion to Western countries, which was to increase substantially annually had the country not defaulted.

The collapse of the Yugoslav economy was partially caused by its non-aligned stance, which had resulted in access to loans from both superpower blocs on different terms. This contact with the United States and the West opened up Yugoslav markets sooner than in the rest of Central and Eastern Europe. In 1989, before the fall of the Berlin Wall, Yugoslav federal Prime Minister Ante Marković went to Washington to meet with President George H. W. Bush to negotiate a new financial aid package. In return for assistance, Yugoslavia agreed to even more sweeping economic reforms, which included a new devalued currency, another wage freeze, sharp cuts in government spending, and the elimination of socially owned, worker-managed companies. The Belgrade nomenclature, with the assistance of Western advisers, had laid the groundwork for Marković's mission by implementing beforehand many of the required reforms, including a major liberalisation of foreign investment legislation.

The country's state-owned banks are obligated to adjust their interest rates to inflation, but this could not be applied to loan contracts made earlier, which stipulated fixed interest rates. During this time, foreign currencies became widely circulated and accepted by businesses along with cheques, especially the German mark.

The first hyperinflation stabilisation program was adopted under the name Economic Reform Program, passed in late 1989, when, for the most part, due to total price liberalisation, Yugoslavia was hit by hyperinflation. The monthly price level increased from month to month, and in December 1989, the inflation percentage was 45%. There was a constant rally in prices, wages and exchange rates. In such a situation, in December 1989, the Economic Reform Program and measures for its implementation were adopted.

The basic measures envisaged by this program were restrictive monetary policy and real positive interest rates, independence of the National Bank of Yugoslavia, denomination of the dinar by "deleting" four zeros, proclaiming the convertibility of the dinar and fixing the dinar exchange rate against the German mark at a ratio of 7:1, freezing of nominal wages for a period of 4 months, freezing of the prices of some inputs (energy products and infrastructure) for a period of 4 months, further foreign trade and fiscal account liberalization, rehabilitation of banks and companies through a special fund that would be formed with foreign financial support, negotiations with the Paris Club of Creditors about debt restructuring, and the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank for a loan to help stabilize the economy.

In the short term, or at the beginning of the application, the program showed some good results: there was a significant slowdown in price and salary growth, foreign exchange reserves—whose level was significant even before the beginning of the application of the

program—started to grow, there was marked positive progress in reducing the foreign trade and budget deficits, etc. However, from the very beginning, there was a decline in industrial production and employment, and somewhat later, the initial positive results also started lacking (as a result of the rebound in prices and wages and the appearance of the "black" exchange rate, the foreign exchange reserves began to decrease rapidly, negative tendencies appeared in the foreign trade and budget sphere, etc.) The fate of this stabilisation program was largely tied to stopping price growth. It was considered that only the prices of the main inputs were to be frozen, and in the conditions of restrictive monetary policy and liberalised imports, there would be no growth in other freely formed prices, and even companies were expected to reduce prices in order to provide liquid assets.

However, expectations did not materialise, and the prices recorded significant growth (the truth is noticeably smaller than before the program was adopted), which led to a rise in wages that (at the very beginning of the implementation of the Program) grew faster than price growth. In circumstances where this happens, one of the key elements of the Program persists—a fixed exchange rate. All this led to a weakening of the competitiveness of the domestic economy, as exports became economically unfeasible, and imports were very lucrative. Bearing in mind that there had been a liberalisation of imports, the domestic market was overwhelmed with imported products, which were absorbed by increasing domestic demand, almost exclusively for consumer goods, fuelled by rapid wage growth. Imports of goods became cheaper than domestic ones, so there was a decline in production because Yugoslav products were not competitive at all, not only in exports but also in the domestic market.

After only a year and a half of implementation, industrial production was reduced by 25%, and unemployment increased by 18%. This further led to strong recession movements in the economy, deterioration of the foreign trade balance and (after an initial increase) a rapid reduction in foreign currency reserves, which prevents further "defending" of the foreign exchange rate.

New legislation was gradually introduced to remedy the situation, but the government mostly tried to fight the crisis by issuing more currency, which only further fuelled the inflation. Power-mongering in big industrial companies led to several large bankruptcies (mostly of large factories), which only increased the public perception that the economy is in a deep crisis. After several failed attempts to fight the inflation with various schemes and due to mass strikes caused by austerity wage freezes, the government of Branko Mikulić resigned and was replaced by a new government in March 1989, headed by Ante Marković, former president of the Government of Croatia and a pragmatic reformist.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Wikipedia contributors. (2025, November 24). Economy of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Wikipedia.

#### 4.4.2 The 1981 Kosovo Student Uprisings

The demonstrations initially started in the student cafeteria on the evening of March 11th, around 7 p.m. The protesters agreed to inform those students they trusted to initiate the demonstrations, using poor conditions in the student cafeteria as the excuse, which was considered a justified reason for reasonable dissatisfaction.



Image SEQ Image 1\*ARABIC 6: Student Uprisings in Pristina

The next demonstrations were held on March 25th and 26th, when the Relay of Youth was supposed to arrive in Pristina, which was carried out every year and dedicated to the birthday of the recently deceased Yugoslav President Tito. On the day the Relay of Youth arrived in Pristina on March 26, 1981, students took to the streets and squares, but this time there were also high school students among them. The demands were now clearly political, which was enough for the police to react harshly. At that time, members of Albanian illegal groups, such as Mehmet Hajrizi and Hadayet Hyseni's group (Marxist-Leninist Organisation of Kosovo - OMLK), were already leading the protests. Immediately after that, demonstrations were announced for April 1st and 2nd, which were supposed to take place across Kosovo, partially happening as planned. Demonstrations were held then - apart from Pristina - in Podujevo, Vucitrn, Viti, Lipljan, Urosevac, Mitrovica, Djakovica, Gnjilane, Prizren, and other cities. It was also the time when the first casualties occurred, with 7 participants and two police officers killed. Hidayet Hyseni spoke at the April 1st rally, holding a megaphone, demanding self-determination for Kosovo Albanians.

These demonstrations were met with no small surprise in the country's leadership. The post-Tito consolidation had just begun, and no one expected anyone to challenge it. The domestic media did not report on the demonstrations on March 11 at all. The initial qualifications of the

Provincial Committee of the League of Communists of Kosovo for the March 11 demonstrations were that they had a character of social dissatisfaction.

The demonstrations in 1981 became a factor and a source of information for the internationalisation of the Albanian issue. The development of the March-April events in 1981 was supported by Albania, and almost all the world's press wrote about it. Western agencies and the press indeed wrote about and supported the demonstrations. Enver Hoxha stated at the 8th Congress of the Party of Labour of Albania, held on November 1, 1981, that the Albanian state had protected and would continue to protect the part of the Albanian nation living in "their countries in Yugoslavia," which did not mean interfering in Yugoslavia's internal affairs.

13 years after the 1968 Protests, the 1981 Student Protest was the first, but not the last, and the most effective large-scale action taken by the Kosovo Albanians to highlight their demands for an Albanian nation, and their desire to leave the Yugoslav Federation.

#### 4.4.3 The Rise of Milošević

The political rise of infamous *Slobodan Milošević* began in the mid 1980s during the deepening economic crisis and the weakening federal authority around the nation. A senior figure within the *League of Communists* of Serbia, Milošević, was portrayed as a loyal party insider rather than a reformer. Yet, as social unrest emerged, Milošević appeared as a key actor capable of translating popular dissatisfaction into political capital.

Milošević's ability to take advantage of internal party conflicts and reposition himself within Serbia's communist leadership contributed to his rise. He steadily displaced more moderate leaders and solidified his power by supporting calls for increased Serbian influence within Yugoslavia. This process laid the groundwork for his eventual dominance by initiating his transition from a technocratic functionary to a mass political leader.

After visiting Kosovo Polje on April 24, 1987, Milošević's ascent to national prominence took a sharp turn. He intervened during altercations between protesters and police, telling Kosovo Serbs who were protesting alleged discrimination by the Albanian majority that "*no one should dare to beat you.*" Widely disseminated throughout Yugoslavia, the declaration struck a deep chord with Serbian viewers and catapulted Milošević into the public eye.

At this point, Milošević's political approach underwent a significant change. He reframed Kosovo as a symbol of Serbian national injustice rather than a federal or administrative problem. He was able to appeal to both party elites and the general public at the same time by mobilising nationalist sentiment while upholding a formal commitment to socialist legality.

Following the Kosovo Polje speech, Milošević strengthened his position of authority by integrating nationalist narratives into Serbia's institutional and political frameworks. The systematic propagation of themes highlighting Serbian victimisation, historical entitlement, and

the necessity of political centralisation was made possible by control over state media. In order to ensure ideological conformity, internal opposition within the League of Communists of Serbia was either eliminated or marginalised.

Kosovo became a key symbol of Milošević's legitimacy as a result of the institutionalisation of Serbian nationalism. The federalism and collective leadership that had supported Yugoslavia since Tito's death were threatened by the elevation of ethnic complaints to the level of state policy. Serbian nationalism destabilised relations between republics and greatly accelerated the breakup of the Yugoslav state as it became an organising principle of governance.

#### 4.4.4 The Abolition of Kosovo's Autonomy

In March 1989, the crisis in Yugoslavia deepened after the adoption of amendments to the Serbian constitution that allowed the Serbian republic's government to reassert effective power over the autonomous provinces of Kosovo and Vojvodina. Up until that time, several political decisions were legislated from within these provinces, and they had a vote on the Yugoslav federal presidency level (six members from the republics and two members from the autonomous provinces).

A group of Kosovo Serb supporters of Milošević who helped bring down Vlasi declared that they were going to Slovenia to hold “the Rally of Truth”, which would decry Milan Kučan as a traitor to Yugoslavia and demand his ousting. However, the attempt to replay the anti-bureaucratic revolution in Ljubljana in December 1989 failed: the Serb protesters who were to go by train to Slovenia were stopped when the police of SR Croatia blocked all transit through its territory in coordination with the Slovene police forces.

In the Presidency of Yugoslavia, Serbia's Borisav Jović (at the time the President of the Presidency), Montenegro's Nenad Bućin, Vojvodina's Jugoslav Kostić and Kosovo's Riza Sapunxhiu started to form a voting bloc.<sup>25</sup>

As the National Assembly of Serbia was preparing constitutional changes that would have formally reduced the level of provincial autonomy, about 1,350 Trepča miners began their underground hunger strike on 20 February 1989 with similar demands about the preservation of the region's autonomous status and the resignation of pro-Milošević politicians of Kosovo. After the announcement of the strike, Linda Abrashi, daughter of the head of the mines, contacted journalist Goran Milić, who set up interviews with the workers in the underground mines. As Milić considered the broadcast of the interviews by Belgrade TV unlikely, he managed to broadcast them with the assistance of another journalist, Bane Vukašinović, who at that time was

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<sup>25</sup> Wikipedia contributors. (2026, January 2). Breakup of Yugoslavia. Wikipedia.

located in Skopje. After the broadcast, the heads of Belgrade TV ordered Milić to return to Belgrade, and the miners' strike report was his last one from Kosovo.

In Belgrade, the media and Serbian politicians accused Azem Vllasi, a provincial leader of the League of Communists, of being the instigator of the strikes, although he denied any involvement in the events. Milošević prepared a plan that would allow him to send police reinforcements to Kosovo, but his plan didn't have the majority vote needed by the other members of the federal Presidency of Yugoslavia. Stipe Šuvar negotiated with the miners as a representative of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia. After about a week, some 180 miners had been hospitalised.

On the evening of 27 February 1989, Rahman Morina, Ali Shukriu and Husamedin Azemi, heads of the pro-Milošević faction in Kosovo, resigned. Late in the evening, the Presidency of Yugoslavia met and decided on "special measures" for Kosovo that effectively instituted an unrestricted state of emergency.

Only 50 strikers were left, the ones who had barricaded themselves inside the "Stari trg" mine, at 850 m underground. At midnight, the Special Anti-Terrorist Unit descended through the fire escape shafts, as elevators were disabled, and started arresting the strikers. The aforementioned "special measures" prompted a move of 1,500 federal police troops under Serbian leadership to Kosovo, where they began a campaign of oppression of Kosovo Albanians or re-establishing a civil order.

A day after the end of the strikes, the Slovenian Committee for Human Rights and the Slovene Writers' Association held a mass meeting in Cankar Hall, where Serbian interventionism in Kosovo was condemned and support for the strikers was expressed. During the meeting, Jožef Školč, head of the Slovene Youth Organisation (SYO), compared the situation of the Albanians in Yugoslavia to that of the Jews during WWII, while Milan Kučan, head of the League of Communists of Slovenia, labelled the strike as a defence of Yugoslavia. The SYO also introduced a badge based on the Star of David with the text Kosovo My Homeland. In response to the Slovenian actions, a protest that attracted about a million people was held in Belgrade, while the Association of Writers of Serbia (AWS) broke off its relations with the Slovene Writers' Association. The Belgrade protesters, among others, requested the cancellation of the resignation of Morina, Shukriu, Azemi and the arrest and execution of Vllasi. In protest, the Albanian members of the AWS left the organisation and accused the Serbian writers of supporting the repression of Albanians.

About a month after the end of the strike, the parliament of Kosovo was surrounded by tanks, and the Serbian police and the deputies were brought in to vote for the effective revocation of the region's autonomy. Most of the Albanian deputies abstained from invalidating the process, as a two-thirds majority was required for constitutional amendments; however, the amendments

were declared passed. The region's provincial status was not formally abolished as Milošević needed its vote to gain influence in the federal presidency of Yugoslavia.<sup>26</sup>

## 4.5 The Unravelling of a State: Yugoslavia's Descent into War (1991–1995)

### 4.5.1 Republics Seceding from Yugoslavia

Slovenia's road to its independence was shaped by its homogenous population, relatively strong economic position within the federation, and its limited exposure to inter ethnic tensions compared to the other republics. Following the simultaneous collapse of communist authorities in Eastern Europe, Slovenia held its referendum on independence in December 1990, with a remarkable majority voting in favour of sovereignty. On June 25, 1991, the parliament of Slovenia officially declared independence from Yugoslavia.

The declaration was followed by an armed confrontation within the Yugoslav Army, referred to as the Ten-Day War. Due to Slovenia's limited strategic importance for the Yugoslav authorities and its lack of a Serb minority, the conflict between the countries remained contained. The Brioni Agreement of 1991 ended the hostility and allowed Slovenia's path to international recognition.

The conflict between the Yugoslav state and Slovenia marked the beginning of the Breakup of Yugoslavia, and the chain of events historically made a note of the Yugoslav Wars.

Despite the minor conflict between Slovenia and Yugoslavia, Croatia had a far more violent process than Slovenia due to the presence of a Serb minority within its borders and competing nationalist projects. Following the elections in 1990, Croatia, under the leadership of Franjo Tuđman, pursued sovereignty as Yugoslavia's federal authority weakened. Croatia declared independence on 25 June 1991.

Unlike Slovenia, Croatia faced immediate reaction from Serb paramilitary forces and the Yugoslav army, which framed the conflict as a defence movement of Serb populations in Croatia. The conflict led to widespread destruction, displacement, and ethnic cleansing. Eventually, Croatia's way of independence was consolidated through military operations and diplomatic actions, taken by the international community.

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<sup>26</sup> Wikipedia contributors. (2025, November 5). *1989 Kosovo miners' strike*. Wikipedia.

#### 4.5.2 The Bosnian War

In 1991, several self-styled “*Serb Autonomous Regions*” were declared in areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina with large Serb populations. Evidence emerged that the Yugoslav People’s Army was being used to send secret arms deliveries to the Bosnian Serbs from Belgrade (Serbia). In August, the *Serb Democratic Party* began boycotting the Bosnian presidency meetings, and in October, it removed its deputies from the Bosnian assembly and set up a “*Serb National Assembly*” in Banja Luka. By then, full-scale war had broken out in Croatia, and the breakup of Yugoslavia was underway. Bosnia and Herzegovina’s position became highly vulnerable. The possibility of partitioning Bosnia and Herzegovina had been discussed during talks between the Croatian president, Franjo Tuđman, and the Serbian president, Slobodan Milošević, earlier in the year, and two Croat “communities” in northern and southwestern Bosnia and Herzegovina, similar in some ways to the “*Serb Autonomous Regions*,” were proclaimed in November 1991.

When the *European Community* (EC; later succeeded by the European Union) recognised the independence of Croatia and Slovenia in December, it invited Bosnia and Herzegovina to apply for recognition also. An independence referendum was held on February 29–March 1, 1992, although Karadžić’s party obstructed voting in most Serb-populated areas, and almost no Bosnian Serbs voted. Of the nearly two-thirds of the electorate that did cast a vote, almost all voted for independence, which President Izetbegović officially proclaimed on March 3, 1992.

Attempts by EC negotiators to promote a new division of Bosnia and Herzegovina into ethnic “cantons” during February and March 1992 failed: different versions of those plans were rejected by each of the three main ethnic parties. When Bosnia and Herzegovina’s independence was recognised by the United States and the EC on April 7, Bosnian Serb paramilitary forces immediately began firing on Sarajevo, and the artillery bombardment of the city by Bosnian Serb units of the Yugoslav army began soon thereafter. During April, many of the towns in eastern Bosnia and Herzegovina with large Bosniak populations, such as Zvornik, Foča, and Višegrad, were attacked by a combination of paramilitary forces and Yugoslav army units. Most of the local Bosniak population was expelled from these areas, the first victims in the country of a process described as ethnic cleansing. Although Bosniaks were the primary victims and Serbs the primary perpetrators, Croats were also among the victims and perpetrators. Within six weeks, a coordinated offensive by the Yugoslav army, paramilitary groups, and local Bosnian Serb forces brought roughly two-thirds of Bosnian territory under Serb control. In May, the army units and equipment in Bosnia and Herzegovina were placed under the command of a Bosnian Serb general, Ratko Mladić.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Britannica Editors (2025, March 17). *Kosovo conflict*. Encyclopedia Britannica.

#### 4.5.3 NATO's Intervention in Bosnia

On November 16, 1992, the *Security Council* issued *Resolution 787*, which called upon member states to "*halt all inward and outbound maritime shipping to inspect and verify their cargos*" to ensure compliance with sanctions. In response to this resolution, NATO deactivated *Maritime Monitor* on November 22 and replaced it with *Operation Maritime Guard*, under which NATO forces were authorised to stop ships and inspect their cargoes. Unlike *Sky Monitor* and *Maritime Monitor*, this was a true enforcement mission, not just a monitoring one.

NATO's air mission also switched from monitoring to enforcement. The Security Council issued *Resolution 816*, which authorised states to use measures "*to ensure compliance*" with the no-fly zone over Bosnia. In response, on April 12, 1993, NATO initiated *Operation Deny Flight*, which was tasked with enforcing the no-fly zone, using fighter aircraft based in the region.

Throughout 1993, the role of NATO forces in Bosnia gradually grew. On June 10, 1993, NATO and the UN agreed that aircraft acting under Deny Flight would provide close air support to *UNPROFOR* at the request of the UN. On June 15, NATO integrated *Operation Maritime Guard* and *Western European Union* naval activities in the region into *Operation Sharp Guard* and expanded its role to include greater enforcement powers.

On February 28, 1994, the scope of NATO involvement in Bosnia increased dramatically. In an incident near *Banja Luka*, NATO fighters from the USAF, operating under Deny Flight, shot down four Serb jets. This was the first combat operation in the history of NATO and opened the door for a steadily growing NATO presence in Bosnia. In April, the presence of NATO airpower continued to grow during a Serb attack on *Goražde*. In response, NATO launched its first close air support mission on April 10, 1994, bombing several Serb targets in the area at the request of UN commanders.

NATO continued its air operations over Bosnia in the first half of 1995. During this period, American pilot *Scott O'Grady* was shot down over Bosnia by a surface-to-air missile fired by Bosnian Serb soldiers. He was eventually rescued safely, but his downing caused concern in the United States and other NATO countries about NATO air superiority in Bosnia and prompted some calls for more aggressive NATO action to eliminate Serb anti-air capabilities.

In July 1995, the Bosnian Serbs launched an attack on the Bosnian town of *Srebrenica*, *ending with the deaths of approximately 8,000 civilians in the Srebrenica massacre*. After the events at Srebrenica, 16 nations met at the *London Conference*, beginning on July 21, 1995, to consider new options for Bosnia. As a result of the conference, *UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali* gave *General Bernard Janvier*, the UN military commander, the authority to request NATO airstrikes without consulting civilian UN officials, as a way to streamline the process. As a result of the conference, the North Atlantic Council and the UN also agreed to use NATO air strikes in response to attacks on any of the other safe areas in Bosnia. The participants

at the conference also agreed in principle to the use of large-scale NATO air strikes in response to future acts of aggression by Serbs.

After the London Conference, NATO planned an aggressive new air campaign against the Bosnian Serbs. On August 28, 1995, Serb forces launched a mortar attack on Sarajevo's marketplace, killing 37 people. Admiral Leighton Smith, the NATO commander, recommended that NATO launch retaliatory air strikes under *Operation Deliberate Force*. On August 30, 1995, NATO officially launched Operation Deliberate Force with large-scale bombing of Serb targets. The airstrikes lasted until September 20, 1995 and involved attacks on 338 individual targets.

Largely as a result of the bombing under Operation Deliberate Force and changes in the battlefield situation, the belligerents in the Bosnian War met in Dayton, Ohio, in November 1995, and signed the *Dayton Accords*, a peace treaty. As part of the accords, NATO agreed to provide 60,000 troops to deploy to the region, as part of the *Implementation Force (IFOR)*, U.S. designation Operation Joint Endeavour. These forces remained deployed until December 1996, when those remaining in the region were transferred to the *Stabilisation Force (SFOR)*. SFOR peacekeepers remained in Bosnia until 2004.<sup>28</sup>

#### 4.5.4 Aftermath of the Bosnian War

It was originally estimated that *at least 200,000 people were killed and more than 2,000,000 displaced* during the 1992–95 war. Subsequent studies, however, concluded that the death toll was actually about 100,000.

In May 1993, the UN established the *International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY)*, and, in the years following the war, the court brought charges against individuals from every ethnicity and nationality represented in the conflict. Most prominent, however, were cases brought against Serb and Bosnian Serb authorities. *Milošević was arrested in 2001 and charged with genocide and crimes against humanity*; he died in prison in 2006 before the conclusion of his trial. Karadžić went into hiding in 1997, and he spent more than a decade at large before his arrest in July 2008. In March 2016, he was found guilty of genocide for his role in the Srebrenica massacre, as well as nine other counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Mladić disappeared after Milošević's arrest in 2001. He was arrested by Serbian authorities in 2011 and placed on trial by the ICTY the following year. In November 2017, he was found guilty of genocide and war crimes and was sentenced to life in prison. In its final case before the expiration of its mandate, the ICTY also found six senior Croatian officials guilty of war crimes and concluded that Tudjman's government had pursued a criminal policy of ethnic cleansing. When that appellate ruling was read on November 29, Slobodan Praljak, who had been

<sup>28</sup> Wikipedia contributors. (2025, July 22). *NATO intervention in Bosnia and Herzegovina*. Wikipedia.

sentenced to 20 years in prison for war crimes committed during the siege of Mostar, loudly declared that he rejected the verdict and drank from a bottle of poison that he had smuggled into the courtroom. The proceedings were immediately suspended, and Praljak died a short time later.<sup>29</sup>

## 4.6 From Silence to Guns: Repression and Radicalisation in Kosovo (1989–1997)

### 4.6.1 Repression and Parallel Structures in Kosovo

A key precursor to the *Kosovo Liberation Army* was the *People's Movement of Kosovo (LPK)*. This group, which argued Kosovo's freedom could be won only through armed struggle, dates back to 1982 and played a crucial role in the creation of the *KLA* in 1993.

Fund-raising began in the 1980s in *Switzerland* by Albanian exiles of the violence of 1981 and subsequent émigrés. Slobodan Milošević revoked Kosovan autonomy in 1989, returning the region to its 1945 status, ejecting ethnic Albanians from the Kosovan bureaucracy and violently putting down protests. In response, Kosovar Albanians established the *Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK)*. Headed by *Ibrahim Rugova*, its goal was independence from Serbia, but via peaceful means. To this end, the LDK set up and developed a "*parallel state*" with a particular focus on education and healthcare.

New schools opened, with houses being turned into facilities for schools, including high schools and universities. During parallel elections, new leaders were elected, forming a new country within a country. Because of the repression, the new government had its seat in exile. There was a parallel football league, following all the sportsmen and women being expelled from the stadiums and sports facilities.<sup>30</sup>

### 4.6.2 The Turn to Armed Struggle

Albanian nationalism was a central tenet of the *KLA*, and many in its ranks supported the creation of a Greater Albania, which would encompass all Albanians in the Balkans, stressing Albanian culture, ethnicity and nation. It was considered a terrorist group until the breakup of Yugoslavia. The *KLA* itself disavowed the creation of a '*Greater Albania*'. The *KLA* made its name known publicly for the first time in 1995, and its first public appearance followed in 1997, at which time its membership was still only around 200. Critical of the progress made by *Rugova*, the *KLA* received boosts from the 1995 Dayton Accords—these granted Kosovo nothing and so generated a more widespread rejection of the LDK's peaceful methods — and from looted weaponry that spilt into Kosovo after the Albanian rebellion of 1997.

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<sup>29</sup> Wikipedia contributors. (2026, January 11). *Bosnian War*. Wikipedia.

<sup>30</sup> Demi, Agron (19 April 2018). "How to build a parallel state"

In February 1996, the KLA undertook a series of attacks against police stations and Yugoslav government officers, saying that they had killed Albanian civilians as part of an ethnic cleansing campaign. Later that year, the British weekly *The European* carried an article by a French expert stating that "German civil and military intelligence services have been involved in training and equipping the rebels to cement German influence in the Balkan area. The birth of the KLA in 1996 coincided with the appointment of *Hansjoerg Geiger* as the new head of the *BND (Bundesnachrichtendienst - German secret Service)*. The BND men were in charge of selecting recruits for the KLA command structure from the 500,000 Kosovars in Albania." *Matthias Kuntzel* tried to prove later on that German secret diplomacy had been instrumental in helping the KLA since its creation.

Serbian authorities denounced the KLA as a terrorist organisation and increased the number of security forces in the region. This had the effect of boosting the credibility of the embryonic KLA among the Kosovar Albanian population. Not long before NATO's military action commenced, the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants reported that "*Kosovo Liberation Army ... attacks aimed at trying to 'cleanse' Kosovo of its ethnic Serb population.*"

One of the goals mentioned by the KLA commanders was the formation of Greater Albania, an irredentist concept of lands that are considered to form the national homeland by many Albanians, encompassing Kosovo, Albania, and the ethnic Albanian minority of neighbouring Macedonia and Montenegro.<sup>31</sup>

## 4.7 A War Within a War: Kosovo's Violent Break with Yugoslavia (1998–1999)

### 4.7.1 The Escalation of Violence in 1998

KLA attacks intensified, centring on the Drenica valley area with the compound of Adem Jashari being a focal point during the first attack on Prekaz on 22 January, where Yugoslav security forces were repelled in an attack on the compound, and were driven out of the village the next day by thousands of Jashari's supporters. Days after Robert Gelbard described the KLA as a terrorist group, Serbian police responded to the KLA attacks in the Likošane area, and pursued some of the KLA to Čirez, resulting in the deaths of four Serbian policemen, 16 Albanian fighters and 26 civilians in the attacks on Likoshane and Čirez. The KLA's goal was to merge its Drenica stronghold with its stronghold in Albania proper, and this would shape the first few months of the fighting.

Serb police then began to pursue Adem Jashari and his followers in the village of Donje Prekaze. After the failure of the first attempt on the Jashari compound in January, on 5 March 1998, a much larger attack on the Jashari compound in Prekaz led to the massacre of 60 Albanians, of whom eighteen were women, and ten were under the age of sixteen. The event

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<sup>31</sup> Wikipedia contributors. (2026, January 10). *Kosovo Liberation Army*. Wikipedia.

provoked massive condemnation from Western capitals. Madeleine Albright said that "this crisis is not an internal affair of the FRY."

On 24 March, Yugoslav forces surrounded the village of Glodjane and attacked a rebel compound there. Despite superior firepower, the Yugoslav forces failed to destroy the KLA unit, which had been their objective. Although there were deaths and severe injuries on the Albanian side, the insurgency in Glodjane was far from stamped out. The village was, in fact, to become one of the strongest centres of resistance in the upcoming war.<sup>32</sup>

#### 4.7.2 Serbian Security Forces and Civilian Casualties

A new Yugoslav government was formed at this time, led by the Socialist Party of Serbia and the Serbian Radical Party. Ultra-nationalist Radical Party chairman Vojislav Šešelj became a deputy prime minister. This increased the dissatisfaction with the country's position among Western diplomats and spokespersons.

In early April, Serbia arranged for a referendum on the issue of foreign interference in Kosovo. Serbian voters decisively rejected foreign interference in the crisis. Meanwhile, the KLA claimed much of the area in and around Deçan and ran a territory based in the village of Glodjane, encompassing its surroundings.

On 21 April 1998, Yugoslav forces started shelling the village of Baballoq. The KLA, composed of 140 volunteers from the village and other KLA soldiers, set up a defensive line which stopped the Yugoslav advance. The fighting lasted until August 1998 and started the Frontal War in the Dukagjini region.

On 31 May 1998, the Yugoslav army and the Serb Ministry of the Interior police began an operation to clear the border of the KLA. NATO's response to this offensive was mid-June's Operation Determined Falcon, a NATO show of force over the Yugoslav borders.

### 5 CURRENT SITUATION

On 9 June 1998, US President Bill Clinton declared a "national emergency" (state of emergency) due to the "unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States" imposed by Yugoslavia and Serbia over the Kosovo War.

On 23 September 1998, acting under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1199. This expressed 'grave concern' at reports reaching the Secretary General that over 230,000 people had been displaced from their homes by 'the excessive and indiscriminate use of force by Serbian security forces and the Yugoslav Army, demanding that all parties in Kosovo and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia cease hostilities and maintain a ceasefire.

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<sup>32</sup> Wikipedia contributors. (2026a, January 3). Kosovo war. Wikipedia.

The North Atlantic Council (NAC) of NATO called its 16 member states to hold an emergency meeting on 24 September 1998.

## 6 MAJOR PARTIES INVOLVED

### 6.1 INTERNATIONAL ACTORS

#### 6.1.1 United Nations (UN) and United Nations Security Council (UNSC)

The United Nations (UN) is a global intergovernmental organisation established by the signing of the UN Charter on 26 June 1945 with the articulated mission of maintaining international peace and security, to develop friendly relations among states, to promote international cooperation, and to serve as a centre for harmonising the actions of states in achieving those goals.

The United Nations headquarters is located in New York City, with several other offices located in Geneva, Nairobi, Vienna, and The Hague. The UN comprises six principal organisations: the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the International Court of Justice, the Secretariat, and the Trusteeship Council, which, together with several specialised agencies and related agencies, make up the United Nations System.

Security Council. It gives primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security to the Security Council, which may meet whenever peace is threatened.

According to the Charter, the United Nations has four purposes:

1. to maintain international peace and security.
2. to develop friendly relations among nations.
3. to cooperate in solving international problems and in promoting respect for human rights.
4. and to be a centre for harmonising the actions of nations.

All members of the United Nations agree to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council. While other organs of the United Nations make recommendations to member states, only the Security Council has the power to make decisions that member states are then obligated to implement under the Charter.

The Security Council held its first session on 17 January 1946 at Church House, Westminster, London. Since its first meeting, the Security Council has taken permanent residence at the United Nations Headquarters in New York City. It also travelled to many cities, holding sessions in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in 1972, in Panama City, Panama, and in Geneva, Switzerland, in 1990.

A representative of each of its members must be present at all times at UN Headquarters so that the Security Council can meet at any time as the need arises.

Members of the United Nations Security Council (as of September 1998):

- **Permanent Five (P5)** - China, Russia, France, United Kingdom, United States
- **Elected Members (Non-Permanent Members)** - Bahrain, Brazil, Gabon, Gambia, and Slovenia<sup>33</sup>

Permanent members have the right to veto any decision that has been made.

In November 1991, the Arbitration Commission of the Peace Conference on Yugoslavia, led by Robert Badinter, concluded at the request of Lord Carrington that the SFR Yugoslavia was in the process of dissolution, that the Serbian population in Croatia and Bosnia did not have a right to self-determination in the form of new states, and that the borders between the republics were to be recognized as international borders. As a result of the conflict, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted UN Security Council Resolution 721 on 27 November 1991, which paved the way to the establishment of the United Nations Protection Force in Yugoslavia. In January 1992, Croatia and Yugoslavia signed an armistice under UN supervision, while negotiations continued between Serb and Croat leaderships over the partitioning of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

On 15 January 1992, the independence of Croatia and Slovenia was recognised worldwide. By then, it had been effectively dissolved into five independent states, which were all subsequently admitted to the UN:

- Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Slovenia were admitted to the UN on 22 May 1992.
- Macedonia was admitted to the UN on 8 April 1993, being provisionally referred to for all purposes within the UN as "The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", due to pressure from Greece, pending settlement of the difference that had arisen over its name.

Before September 1998, the United Nations and the UN Security Council (UNSC) had a growing but limited role in dealing with the breakup of Yugoslavia and the conflicts that arose from it. The UNSC first recognised the crisis as an international issue through Resolution 713 (1991). This resolution imposed a blanket arms embargo on the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. It formally identified the situation as a threat to global peace and security. In the early 1990s, further resolutions set up a wide range of sanctions and peacekeeping measures, most notably creating the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in 1992 and applying economic and diplomatic sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). Although these actions marked a significant level of UN involvement in a European conflict since the Cold War, their effectiveness was hampered by strict mandates, weak enforcement, and political disagreements within the Council,

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<sup>33</sup> What is the Security Council? | Security Council. (n.d.).

especially about using force. During this time, the UN focused more on containing the conflict and providing humanitarian access than on forceful conflict resolution, highlighting major weaknesses in its approach during the Bosnian war.

In this larger context of UN engagement, Kosovo received little attention from the UNSC until 1998, even though UN human rights organisations closely monitored the situation throughout the 1990s. Kosovo's absence from the Dayton Peace Accords in 1995 reinforced its status as a domestic issue for the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, limiting the UNSC's ability to intervene. However, reports from the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in the former Yugoslavia detailed ongoing discrimination, political repression, and the excessive use of force against the Kosovo Albanian population, repeatedly warning of the potential for violence to escalate. The UNSC partly recognised these concerns in Resolution 1160 (March 1998), which imposed an arms embargo specifically targeting Kosovo and condemned the violence from both Serbian security forces and the Kosovo Liberation Army. Even while referencing Chapter VII, the resolution did not authorise enforcement actions or send a preventive mission, reflecting ongoing divisions among permanent members regarding sovereignty and intervention. By the end of August 1998, the UN's role in Kosovo remained mostly declarative and preventive but limited in practical effect, setting the scene for NATO-led actions that followed.

### **6.1.2 United States of America**

The involvement of the United States in the Kosovo conflict of the late 1990s was shaped by strategic, humanitarian, and institutional considerations, particularly within the framework of NATO and post-Cold War European security. U.S. policy evolved from diplomatic engagement to direct military intervention, culminating in a leading role in NATO's 1999 air campaign against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

During the early 1990s, the United States initially treated Kosovo as a subsidiary issue within the broader disintegration of Yugoslavia. While Washington supported international efforts to stabilize Bosnia and Croatia, Kosovo remained largely under Serbian control following the revocation of its autonomy in 1989. U.S. involvement at this stage consisted mainly of diplomatic pressure on Belgrade, including warnings that repression in Kosovo could trigger international consequences. These signals, however, were not matched by substantial enforcement mechanisms.

By the mid-1990s, the situation in Kosovo deteriorated significantly. Serbian security forces intensified repression against the ethnic Albanian majority, while the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) emerged as an armed resistance movement. The United States gradually shifted its position from viewing the KLA primarily as a destabilizing actor to recognizing it as a relevant political and military force. Washington supported diplomatic initiatives such as the Contact Group and later the Rambouillet negotiations in early 1999, which sought to impose a settlement granting Kosovo substantial autonomy within Yugoslavia. The failure of these negotiations,

particularly Belgrade's refusal to accept the proposed security arrangements, marked a turning point in U.S. policy.

The United States played a central role in advocating for NATO military intervention. American officials framed the crisis as a humanitarian emergency, emphasizing mass displacement, ethnic cleansing, and the risk of regional destabilization. The Clinton administration argued that inaction would undermine NATO's credibility and allow a repetition of atrocities seen earlier in Bosnia. When diplomatic efforts collapsed, the United States became the principal architect and largest contributor to NATO's air campaign, Operation Allied Force, which began in March 1999 without explicit authorization from the United Nations Security Council.

Militarily, the United States provided the majority of NATO's precision strike capabilities, intelligence assets, aerial refuelling, and command-and-control infrastructure. U.S. aircraft flew a significant proportion of sorties, and American political leadership was decisive in maintaining alliance cohesion during the 78-day bombing campaign. The strategy relied almost exclusively on-air power, reflecting both a desire to minimize NATO casualties and domestic political constraints against deploying ground troops.

Following Serbia's acceptance of a withdrawal from Kosovo in June 1999, the United States contributed troops to the NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR) and supported the establishment of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). U.S. involvement in the post-conflict phase focused on security stabilization, refugee return, and the development of provisional political institutions. Over time, Washington became a key supporter of Kosovo's movement toward independence, formally recognizing Kosovo as a sovereign state in 2008.

In analytical terms, U.S. involvement in the Kosovo conflict reflected a synthesis of humanitarian interventionism and strategic alliance politics. While American leaders emphasized moral responsibility and the prevention of mass atrocities, the intervention also served to reinforce NATO's post-Cold War role and U.S. leadership within it. The Kosovo case thus became a significant precedent in debates over the legitimacy of humanitarian intervention without explicit UN authorization and the scope of American responsibility in shaping the post-Cold War international order.

### **6.1.3 OSCE (Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe)**

The Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) is a regional security-oriented intergovernmental organisation comprising member states in Europe, North America, and Asia. Its mandate includes issues such as arms control, the promotion of human rights, freedom of the press, and free and fair elections.

The Secretariat, located in Vienna, OSCE has observer status at the United Nations. OSCE committed the following operations:

### **1992 Georgia Mission**

The OSCE Mission to Georgia was established in November 1992 with its headquarters in the capital, Tbilisi. The Mission's mandate expired on 31 December 2008. Between these dates, it was powerless to control the outbreak of the August 2008 Russo-Georgian war.

### **1993 Mission to Moldova**

The objective of the mission to Moldova is to facilitate a comprehensive and lasting political settlement of the Transnistria conflict in all its aspects, strengthening the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova within its internationally recognised borders with a special status for Transnistria.

OSCE promoted a 5+2 format as a diplomatic negotiation platform, which began in 2005, suspended by Russia and Transnistria in 2006 until it started again in 2012, before making slow progress over the next ten years. The process stopped following the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine, as two of the parties were then at war with each other.

### **1995 Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina**

The Bosnian War concluded in 1995 with the Dayton Agreement, with the ongoing OSCE Mission being mandated to help secure lasting peace and therefore to build a stable, secure, and democratic state through building sustainable democratic institutions, strengthening good governance and human rights principles, and supporting the development of a multi-national and multi-ethnic democratic society.<sup>34</sup>

In 1992, the OSCE established long-term missions in Kosovo, Sandžak, and Vojvodina aimed at monitoring human rights conditions, minority treatment, and emerging security risks. These missions mostly included regular reports documenting the systematic political and cultural discrimination against the Albanians in Kosovo. Through these activities, the OSCE sought to exercise its early-warning mandate by alerting participating states to the potential for violent escalation in the province.

Yet the operational impact of the OSCE was significantly limited by political and legal limitations. In 1993, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia compelled the withdrawal of OSCE missions, effectively removing the organisation's field presence and exposing its dependence on host-state consent.

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<sup>34</sup> Wikipedia contributors. (2026c, January 6). Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe - Wikipedia.

## 6.2 REGIONAL ACTORS

### 6.2.1 Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY)

Yugoslavia's involvement in the Kosovo conflict was central, as the crisis unfolded within the territory of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), then composed of Serbia and Montenegro. The conflict was fundamentally a struggle between the Yugoslav/Serbian state and the ethnic Albanian population of Kosovo over political authority, autonomy, and national self-determination.

Following the abolition of Kosovo's autonomous status in 1989 by the Serbian leadership under Slobodan Milošević, the Yugoslav state consolidated direct control over the province. This was accompanied by the dismissal of ethnic Albanian officials, restrictions on Albanian-language education and media, and the reorganization of security forces under Serbian authority. Throughout the early 1990s, Kosovo Albanians pursued largely nonviolent resistance under the leadership of Ibrahim Rugova, establishing parallel political and social institutions outside the Yugoslav state framework. Belgrade, however, refused to restore autonomy and treated these structures as illegal.

By the mid 1990s, frustration with nonviolent strategies led to the emergence of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), which began armed attacks against Yugoslav and Serbian police and military targets. The Yugoslav government defined the KLA as a terrorist organization and launched large-scale counterinsurgency operations. These operations, particularly in 1998 and early 1999, involved heavy use of security forces, village clearances, and population displacement, which international observers described as systematic repression and, in some cases, ethnic cleansing.

Yugoslavia rejected international mediation efforts that sought to impose a political settlement granting Kosovo substantial autonomy. The Rambouillet negotiations in early 1999 represented the most significant diplomatic attempt to resolve the conflict. While the Yugoslav delegation was willing to discuss autonomy, it categorically refused the presence of NATO troops on its territory, viewing this as a violation of sovereignty. This refusal became the immediate trigger for NATO's air campaign.

During NATO's Operation Allied Force (March-June 1999), Yugoslavia became the direct target of sustained aerial bombardment. The government attempted to maintain control over Kosovo while also defending strategic infrastructure throughout Serbia and Montenegro. The bombing severely damaged Yugoslav military assets, industry, transportation networks, and civilian infrastructure. Politically, the campaign further isolated the Milošević regime and weakened its domestic and international legitimacy.

In June 1999, Yugoslavia accepted the Kumanovo Military-Technical Agreement, which required the withdrawal of its military and police forces from Kosovo and the deployment of an international security presence (KFOR). Kosovo was placed under United Nations administration (UNMIK), effectively removing it from Yugoslav state control, though formal sovereignty remained unresolved until Kosovo's declaration of independence in 2008.

Analytically, Yugoslavia's role in the Kosovo conflict illustrates the tension between state sovereignty and claims of self-determination in the post-Cold War Balkans. The government framed its actions as a defence of territorial integrity and public order, while external actors and many observers interpreted them as systematic repression of a minority population. The outcome marked a decisive reduction of Yugoslavia's authority and accelerated the political decline of the Milošević regime, which collapsed in 2000.

### 6.2.2 Kosovo

Kosovo's involvement in the conflict was as the primary territorial and social arena in which the struggle unfolded, and as the central object of competing claims by the Yugoslav state and the ethnic Albanian majority seeking self-determination.

After the revocation of Kosovo's autonomous status in 1989, the province was placed under direct Serbian control. Ethnic Albanians, who constituted the overwhelming majority of the population, were systematically excluded from political institutions, public employment, education, and media. In response, Kosovo Albanian leaders, most notably Ibrahim Rugova, organized a parallel political system during the early 1990s, including unofficial schools, health services, and elections. This strategy emphasized nonviolent resistance and international recognition of Kosovo's political claims.

By the mid-1990s, dissatisfaction with nonviolent methods led to the rise of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), which initiated an armed campaign against Yugoslav and Serbian police and military forces. The KLA framed its struggle as a war of national liberation aimed at independence. Yugoslav authorities responded with large-scale security operations that targeted both insurgents and civilian populations believed to support them. These operations resulted in widespread displacement, destruction of villages, and significant civilian casualties.

During 1998–1999, Kosovo became the site of intense fighting and humanitarian crisis. Hundreds of thousands of civilians were displaced internally or forced to flee to neighbouring states. International observers documented patterns of forced expulsions, mass killings, and intimidation, which were widely characterized as ethnic cleansing. These developments placed Kosovo at the centre of international diplomatic efforts, including the Rambouillet negotiations, where Kosovo Albanian representatives accepted a plan for wide autonomy under international supervision, while Yugoslavia rejected key security provisions.

Following NATO's intervention and the withdrawal of Yugoslav forces in June 1999, Kosovo was placed under United Nations administration (UNMIK) and protected by a NATO-led force (KFOR). Kosovo Albanians returned in large numbers, while many Serbs and other minorities left, fearing retaliation and insecurity. Kosovo's political institutions were gradually developed under international supervision, moving from provisional self-government toward de facto statehood.

In the longer term, Kosovo's involvement in the conflict shaped its political trajectory. The war transformed Kosovo from a suppressed province within Yugoslavia into an internationally administered territory and eventually, in 2008, into a self-declared independent state recognized by many, though not all, members of the international community. The conflict thus functioned as the decisive moment in Kosovo's transition from internal autonomy claims to full claims of sovereignty.

## 7 POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS & PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS

- **UN Security Council Resolution 1160 (31 March 1998)**

Resolution 1160 marked the Security Council's first formal response to the escalating violence in Kosovo, framing the situation as a potential threat to regional peace and stability. It imposed an arms embargo on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, including Serbia and Montenegro, and condemned both the excessive use of force by Serbian security forces and terrorist acts by the Kosovo Liberation Army. The resolution emphasized the need for political dialogue, respect for human rights, and a peaceful settlement, signalling the Council's initial preference for diplomatic and coercive, but non-military, measures.

- **UN Security Council Resolution 1199 (23 September 1998)**

Resolution 1199 responded to the worsening humanitarian situation by explicitly determining that the conflict in Kosovo constituted a threat to international peace and security. It demanded an immediate ceasefire, the withdrawal of Yugoslav and Serbian forces used for civilian repression, and unhindered access for humanitarian organizations. The resolution also called for the return of refugees and internally displaced persons, reflecting a shift from general concern to urgent, binding demands aimed at stopping mass displacement and civilian suffering.

- **UN Security Council Resolution 1203 (24 October 1998)**

Resolution 1203 endorsed agreements between Yugoslavia, the OSCE, and NATO that established international verification mechanisms, including the OSCE Kosovo Verification Mission on the ground and NATO aerial surveillance. It demanded full compliance with earlier resolutions, particularly regarding ceasefire obligations and human rights standards. Although it strengthened international oversight, it stopped short

of authorizing the use of force, instead relying on monitoring and diplomatic pressure to secure compliance.

- **UN Security Council Resolution 1239 (14 May 1999)**

Resolution 1239 was adopted during NATO's ongoing air campaign against Yugoslavia and focused primarily on the humanitarian catastrophe caused by the conflict. It called for safe and unhindered access to refugees and internally displaced persons and urged greater coordination of international humanitarian assistance. Notably, it avoided addressing the legality of NATO's intervention, reflecting deep divisions within the Security Council and a limited consensus centered on managing the humanitarian crisis.

- **UN Security Council Resolution 1244 (10 June 1999)**

Resolution 1244 established the post-war political and legal framework for Kosovo by authorizing an international civil and security presence following Yugoslavia's acceptance of withdrawal terms. It created UNMIK to administer Kosovo and authorized a NATO-led force, KFOR, to provide security, while formally reaffirming the territorial integrity of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and granting Kosovo substantial autonomy. This resolution became the foundational document governing Kosovo's international administration and shaped debates over sovereignty and self-determination for years to come.

## 8 COMMITTEE DYNAMICS

### 1. General Differences of the Committee Dynamics from the Rules of Procedure

Apart from the formal MUN Rules of Procedure, members of the North Atlantic Council are not delegates, but *Ambassadors*. The formal address of the members is *Ambassador of [Country]*. Their formal names are *Permanent Ambassador of [Country] in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation*.

Along with the specific boundaries and additions. The remaining and unspecified rules regarding the committee and conference are specified in the official *Rules of Procedure of Istanbul Technical University Model United Nations Conference 2026*.

Members of the Council are affiliated with their countries' formal embassies to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. (*ie. Permanent Ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation is affiliated with the Permanent Embassy of the Republic of Türkiye.*)

Ambassadors of the Council cannot make any decision regarding their country, its legal and military organs. They are allowed to have private conversations with the formal bodies of their countries.

### 2. Vetoes

Each member of the Council has their rights to veto the documents and decisions that have passed in the Council. In order to use their right to veto, countries should write a formal decree to the board or raise motions to veto the passed documents.

Delegates can also send message papers to veto a specific document.

To deliver a formal veto, delegates have to deliver a speech or a formal text to explain the reason for the veto.

The chair can either accept or reject the veto sent by a delegate.

If the chairboard approves a veto, the formal document instantly fails.

Delegates cannot raise a veto more than one (or two upon the chair's discretion).

Vetoed documents can later be put on vote.

### 3. Formal Debate

The formal debate of the Historical NATO committee is simply based on the Semi-Moderated Caucus.

A Semi-Moderated Caucus is a caucus that takes place within the formal proceedings of the Cabinet's session.

The maximum time duration of a speech is 5 minutes. Its purpose is to facilitate debate on specific issues. The Council Member raising the motion must briefly explain the purpose of the Semi-Moderated Caucus. They do not specify a total time limit or a time limit for individual speeches.

The Committee Director is the only authority with the means of deciding the total time of the Caucus and may interrupt or terminate the speech of any Council Member.

In Semi-Moderated Caucuses, the right to speak is always granted, and Council Members may remain seated while they are delivering their speech. A "Motion for a Semi-Moderated Caucus" requires a simple majority and the approval of the Committee Board to pass.

Delegates may also raise motions upon the Moderated Caucuses.

### 4. Tour de Table

The President shall have the discretion to conduct a Tour de Table at any time during the formal session.

During the Tour de Table, each Ambassador shall briefly outline their views on the matter under discussion.

The time allocated to each speaker shall be determined by the committee board.

Tour de Table automatically terminates when the last speaker in the chamber finalises their speech.

Committee Board members shall be included in the Tour de Table.

Delegates cannot raise a motion to have, extend, or terminate a Tour de Table.

## 5. Operations

The members of the charter can propose documents in order to conduct a military operation under the title of NATO.

In order to propose an operation, delegates need to discuss the details and the scope of the operation.

Once the discussion concludes, one or more delegates will sign a document including the specifications of the operation.

The documents related to the operation are likely similar to the operation directives in the crisis committees.

Delegates must propose press releases after the operation orders.

To commit to the operation proposed, the chairboard will establish a voting procedure. Apart from the formal voting procedures, the voting for the operation proposals can be conducted under the chair's discretion by reading the document and conducting placard voting afterwards.

The Board may vote on the operations and the press releases either individually or together regarding its discretion.

The document requires at least two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) of the total votes.

Delegates cannot remain abstained during the voting procedure regarding the documents.

The proposed document can be amended after getting rejected.

The operations must be added to the communique.

## 6. Press Releases

Members of the charter can propose press releases to deliver their opinion regarding the discussed situation, individually, jointly, and as a committee. This document aims to change public opinion related to NATO's or countries' individual stances on the discussion.

There are three types of press releases:

#### Individual Press Releases

Countries individually may deliver press releases announcing the countries' formal stances on the topic.

Delegates can directly send their press releases by writing "*Individual Press Release*" at the top of the formal documents, through and with the chairboard's approval.

#### 7. Joint Press Releases

Two or more countries may deliver press releases announcing their stances together.

In order to deliver a joint press release, each delegate wishing to contribute to the document has to write and sign their name below the document.

Delegates can directly send their press releases by writing "*Joint Press Release*" at the top of the formal documents, through and with the chairboard's approval.

#### 8. Committee Press Releases

Countries may deliver press releases as a whole committee; these documents will be delivered under the title of NATO and represent the entire organisation.

Delegates must discuss the contents of the press release.

To deliver and vote upon the document, at least one-third ( $\frac{1}{3}$ ) of the committee has to sign it.

Delegates may deliver the press release directly to the chair by writing "*Committee Press Release*" on top of the document.

Once the committee board obtains the press release, the document is to be put on vote.

In order to pass and publish the document, at least two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) of the committee has to vote in favour of the document.

Delegates can veto the document.

The committee press releases must be put in the communique.

Press releases must contain the details regarding where, when, and what will be published in the specified news organisations. The releases can be published in TV, radio, and newspapers.

Delegates may send press releases to the following news organisations:

**Germany** - Die Welt, Der Spiegel

**United Kingdom** - BBC (British Broadcasting Channel), The Guardian

**Türkiye** - TRT (Turkish Radio and Television Corporation), Hürriyet

**United States** - CNN US, The Washington Post

**Kosovo** - Rilindja, RTS (Radio Television Serbia)

**International** - Reuters, AP (Associated Press)

Delegates cannot take back the press releases they have sent.

The press releases may not be published regarding the political position of NATO on the discussions.

The public approval may increase, decrease, or remain the same.

The committee board may reject or hold the press releases.

### **Communiqué**

The official substantive document created by the committee is a communiqué, and it is nothing but the compiled substantive documents produced during the duration of the Committee.

Communiqués contain actions of the NAC submitted in draft form under the sponsorship of the delegations working in a council. Additionally, communiqués address an opinion on a given situation and recommend action plans to be enforced by the Alliance.

NATO Communiqués have a legally binding character for all members of the Alliance.

Draft communiqués at the moment of their submission are considered to have gathered the concurrent opinion of a large majority of states within the Council, but still are to be debated and

revised through the amendment procedure. The NAC Draft Communiqués have to be adopted in absolute consensus.

The communique shall include all the directives, press releases and clauses written and voted upon and accepted by the Committee.

### Example Communique

The Communique below is from the TED University Model United Nations Conference 2024 (TEDUMUN'24), Historical North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (H-NATO), Kardak Crisis.

#### COMMUNIQUE

*North Atlantic Treaty Organisation,*

*Aware and deeply concerned* as the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation of the escalating crisis in the Imia/Kardak region, which is about the territorial claims upon the mentioned islets between the Hellenic Republic and the Republic of Turkey. It is seen that the islets have geographical and historical significance for both respective nations, by elevating their position of overlooking both Hellenic and Turkish shores. Both respective nations believe that the Imia/Kardak Islets are symbols of their national pride.

*Understanding* that previously signed agreements about the particular subject are not sufficient to address the ambiguity of the Imia/Kardak claims, as NATO has agreed that a new agreement is needed to resolve the recently encountered aggression from respective nations.

*Anxious* about any ongoing and further tension and threat involving both the allied nations located in the Aegean region and the East-Mediterranean region that are leading to the polarisation and/or seat-taking actions, which damage the unity and cooperation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.

1. **Proclaims** that, to eliminate the undergoing and possible future misconceptions and confusions which has caused and increased the decades-long raised tensions and war-triggering diplomatic and military actions taken by the Hellenic Republic and the Republic of Turkey, and noting the strategic and critical importance of the Republic of Turkey in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization which is lining a border directly against the Russian Federation and Iraq which the NATO specifically underlines their threat against the organization; the administration and responsibility regarding the Imia/Kardak Islets and the Imia/Kardak region must and will stay under the control of the Republic of Turkey.

2. **Declares** the restriction of any further militarization regarding the Imia/Kardak Islets and Imia/Kardak Region by both the involved nations; the Hellenic Republic and the Republic of Turkey in order to prevent any possible threats and war-threatening actions which the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation is concerned and is anxious of any further actions that can be recognized as directly and/or indirectly threat of war which NATO has already witnessed multiple times.

3. **Strongly encourages** the demilitarisation of the Imia/Kardak region and Imia/Kardak Islets from both North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's allied nations, the Hellenic Republic and the Republic of Turkey, in order to conclude the current and ongoing tensions involving the legal and diplomatic issues involving the past actions taken by both the Hellenic Republic and the Republic of Turkey.

4. **Approves** the exception of the declared restriction of demilitarisation of the Imia/Kardak Islets and the ongoing military operation regulated by the Republic of Turkey, in order to ensure their sovereignty on the island and their homeland, in order to conclude the ongoing crisis and tension involving the Hellenic Republic, and underlines that this exception will be the first, last, and only exception considered.

5. **Strongly advises** the Hellenic Republic and the Republic of Turkey to distribute press releases in order to prevent any further domestic and international civilian and political confusions and/or misconceptions, in order to lower the tensions in the states. With the local press releases approved by the respective governments. The press releases will avoid any aggressive nationalist writing to prevent further tensions from both civilians and politicians in the respective states.

6. **Reiterates** the “Operation Kardak”, and the rescission of the United States Navy cruisers under the NATO operation in order to investigate and observe the past actions in the Imia/Kardak Islets with the ships in order to ensure safety and stability in the islets with the surveillance of the naval ships of Turkey and NATO. The ships will contain one Hellenic and one Turkish commander, and will secure the region for three days.

*North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's statement*

*In order to explain our actions and to lower tensions*

#### **Press Release**

*26 December, 1995*

As the North Atlantic Treaty Organization we are aware and deeply saddened about the newly acquired incident, a ship with a Turkish flag being stranded on the Imia/Kardak Islets. With the actions taken, the personnel on the ship have been evacuated. It has been confirmed that the ship poses no threat whatsoever. As NATO, by closely observing the region, we aim to prevent any possible disagreements between the two neighbouring states, the Hellenic Republic and the Republic of Turkey.

*North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's statement*

*In order to explain our actions and to lower tensions*

#### **Press Release**

*January 5, 1996*

As the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, with the deep understanding that the Imia/Kardak issue can cause much bigger disagreements, in order to secure the ongoing trade roads in both the East Mediterranean Sea and the Aegean Sea, NATO defensive forces consisting of three cruisers from the United States Sixth Fleet have been sent, which have been already located and have been patrolling in the East Mediterranean Sea. NATO guarantees that these vessels will only be used for a peaceful operation in order to ensure the safety of the trade route.

*The Republic of Turkey's statement*

*To explain the actions taken by NATO*

#### **Press Release**

*January 5 1996*

To our people's attention, due to the recent tension, NATO has sent a fleet to the Kardak region. The fleet is only there for observation purposes, so there is no need to worry. We would like to state that, as the government, we will not allow any action that restricts our sovereignty.

*North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's statement*

*Towards the explanation of the Kardak Operation*

#### **Press Release**

*January 31 1996*

As NATO, after high tension and negotiations, NATO figured out a solution for our nation's safety. As NATO, until we protect our existence, we will ensure our nation's safety and stability. We decided that all navies will leave the area, but there will be one Turkish navy ship and one NATO cruiser with the commanders from the Hellenic Republic and the Republic of Turkey.

*Hellenic Republic's statement*

*Towards the explanation of the helicopter crash*

#### **Press Release**

*February 1 1996*

To our people's attention, we are deeply saddened by the loss of our highly valued 3 Hellenic officers during a helicopter crash in the Aegean islet Imia/Kardak in order to survey the area. The families of the officers are informed alongside the clearing of crash sites in the area.

## **OPERATION “SURVEILLANCE”**

*Three cruisers from the Sixth Fleet of the United States Navy will be sent to the Imia/Kardak region to observe and analyse the ongoing tensions. The cruisers will escort the trade routes to ensure security until further notice. The cruisers will depart from the Sixth Fleet on the Second of January and are expected to arrive on the Fifth of January. The operation will begin immediately upon arrival. The three cruisers will be in contact with the Sixth Fleet and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation headquarters. If any intervention occurs, the cruisers will inform the fleet and NATO headquarters immediately.*

1. The cruisers which are sent by the US Navy in the name of NATO have been sent to provide security and peace to de-escalate the tension which is between the Hellenic Republic and the Republic of Turkey.
2. The cruisers are sent with the aim of observation and analysis. These cruisers are not heavily armed.
3. The US cruisers in the name of NATO will stay in the region until further notice.
4. If there is any threat regarding the Hellenic Republic or the Republic of Turkey, the officers in the cruisers will be reporting the ongoing situation continuously.

## **OPERATION “KARDAK”**

*If the actions that are going to be taken are approved by the government of the United States of America, an operation under the name of “Operation Kardak” will be held. Operation Kardak will include the retreatment of two ships from the US Navy, which had previously been sent to the region. Two commanders, one from the Hellenic Republic and the other from the Republic of Turkey, will be transported to the other cruiser, which will remain in the area by unarmed ships. A Turkish ship, identical to the existing ship by model, will be sent to the area for three days in order to ensure the safety and stabilisation of the region. The Hellenic and Turkish commanders will be unarmed. The warships from both states will retreat from the area at 6 AM, February, which will be the day the Operation Kardak begins. Turkish commandos on the islet will remain in the area for a month to further ensure the safety of the region.*

1. Two of the previously sent three cruisers from the Sixth Fleet of the US Navy, in the name of NATO, will be withdrawn. The remaining cruiser in the region will continue its duty with two unarmed commanders from both respective nations.
2. The mentioned commanders will get on board by unarmed ships from their own navy forces.
3. The previously sent warships from the respective nations will start to withdraw from the region at 0600, 1st of February 1996.
4. A Turkish cruiser that is identical by model to the previously sent US cruisers will be sent to the region, which will be stationed for 3 days, in order to ensure security and stability in the region.
5. The Turkish commandos on the islets will remain in the region for the duration of a month.
6. The Turkish flag will stay without a time limit.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> TEDUMUN'24, 2024 TED University Model United Nations Conference, Substantive Document (Communiqué) of the Historical North Atlantic Treaty Organization (H-NATO)

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