

CHAPTER VII

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

The Civil War in Bosnia and Herzegovina, like all wars of this kind, did not by itself answer any questions as to which side was in the right and which was in the wrong. However, what is sadly certain is that all the parties to it were also its victims. This war had detrimental ramifications and long lasting effects which will forever leave their mark on what originally seemed to be the harmonious and integrated Kingdom of Yugoslavia, and then the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Significantly, both these authoritarian regimes had been able to maintain the appearance of a unified federated country which encompassed such divergent components as Orthodox Serbs, Catholic Croats, Muslims, Slovenes, Macedonians and the Albanians living in the territory of the autonomous province of Kosovo and Metohija. These widely differing groups with their ethno-religious minorities were intertwined into each other. But when that system of rule stumbled and fell, the entire state structure faltered and collapsed. As long as the federation was held together, it was at the price not only of eclipsing ethnic, national and religious competition, but also of banning any open discussion of these matters by any party, lest the debate should escalate into argument and open up a rift that could break the nation apart, as indeed happened after Tito's death in 1980.

What was left from the generations of mutual repressed resentment between the component members of the Yugoslavian state was the perpetuation of the intolerance which pitted each of them against the others, as they regard the perennial struggle between them as one continuum. For example, the Serbs' outbursts of animosity (and outbursts of animosity took place on all sides during the civil war) against Croats and Bosniaks during the Civil War in Bosnia and Herzegovina took place as a conse-

quence of their painful remembrance of the genocide committed against them in the Independent State of Croatia under the Ustasha regime in the Second World War, in collaboration with the Nazis, and who had sworn to annihilate the Serbian people, either by forced conversion (into Catholicism), or by outright genocide, and who had established dozens of concentration camps including Jadovno and Jasenovac where they engaged in implementing their deadly design. In effect, the essence of the Civil War in Bosnia and Herzegovina was the deadly interplay between its three major ethno-religious actors: Orthodox Serbs, Catholic Croats and Muslim Bosniaks.

For reasons that remain unclear Western Europe, acting in concert within NATO under the leadership, instigation and military cover of the Bill Clinton Administration in the US, determined to side with the Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina (from 1993 Bosniaks) in this struggle, and moved to provide them with weapons and to sanctify their “justified” struggle for independence. By adopting this policy they blindly ushered into South East Europe two Muslim political entities (Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Kosovo) in addition to existing Albania, thus unwittingly driving a Muslim wedge into the heart of the Christian Balkans and allowing it to reach the Adriatic and the Aegean Sea. The US was apparently hoping to link the former Soviet-Muslim states that were disengaging from the Russian grip (Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyztan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Azarbaijan) as one “moderate” Muslim continuum to NATO member and American client, the Turkey of the pre-Erdogan era. But by the time radical Erdogan won his country’s elections in 2002 and dislodged the civil governments that had been the anchor of the moderate Islam the West had hoped for, the US had already been deeply engaged and committed to an Islamic Balkans, which the radical Turkish President has been trying hard to Islamize under Neo-Ottoman aegis.

Be that as it may, to justify their choice of the Islamic side of the struggle in Bosnia, the Americans, seconded by other NATO members, tagged the Muslims as saints and “innocent victims” and the Serbs as the “evil aggressors” who deserved Western military bombing and condemnation, and of outright double crossing, in spite of leading the Serbs, during negotiations concerning the Yugoslav Wars, to believe that their territory and sovereignty, as well as their military assets and diplomatic rights would be strictly preserved, only for the Serbs to end up betrayed and bombed and their status demeaned. The net result has been the development of three divergent, and often contradictory narratives of the war, each lauding and inflating the allegedly positive role of its party, hiding the horrors its troops, leaders and followers had committed and imputing to the others all the imaginable, but often imagined and manufactured evils and calamities that were blamed on its enemies. In short, there is

enough blame to go around all parties: yes, there was a Srebrenica and other crimes to blame on the Serbs, but no less barbaric blood-letting to blame on Muslims and Croats in Sarajevo and elsewhere throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Independent Commission of Inquiry that was established by the Government of Republika Srpska to inquire into the events in Sarajevo during the Civil War in Bosnia and Herzegovina was structured precisely to produce a more objective account where most of the crucial events of that complicated and hatred-motivated war are reported, no party is favored with credit it did not earn and no party is condemned for evil it did not commit. Every statement, contention, claim or argument is mentioned only after it has been checked and cross-checked for verification, while all rumors, gossip, propaganda and unfounded accusations are shelved, so that, to the extent humanly possible, only what is considered “objective” evidence and independent and cross-verified facts have become part of the reported narrative. It is clear that the contradicting narratives are not only geared to create imaginary histories in order to idealize a past but also to direct certain policies and to prescribe certain positions and actions. And when the stated narrative is anchored on a religious base or belief, this becomes all the more crucial in both making up the stories, and imparting them to young generations in order to perpetuate hoaxes into solid “patrimony” and rationalize myths *post-factum* as veritable history.

The Independent Commission was composed of a team of independent international experts and was formed to conduct research, first having taken care to eliminate any subjectivity by making objective and impartial assessments of historical events that took place during the Civil War in Bosnian and Herzegovina. It reached relevant all-encompassing conclusions which have crucial meaning and historical value not only for all citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, but with special emphasis on the Serbian families of the war victims that suffered unrepairable losses, within the context of the reconciliation policies supported by all parties, including the Muslim leadership in Sarajevo, and the International Community. Importantly, it also achieved historical justice, commemorating with proper respect all human victims who fell as a result of a human savagery in the heart of Europe, and it aims to prevent, by all means possible in a collective action of joint forces of all nations, any repetition of such tragedies that cause large-scale trans-generational psychological, physiological and emotional trauma and which have far-reaching consequences for separate nations and for humanity as a whole.

We can now analyze the long-term findings of this investigation into results and consequences, none of which was necessarily intentional. The direct results of this

war, which was fatal for the core participants and only marginal for the outsiders who intervened uninvited, were multiple:

- a. The crystallization of separate nation-states from the constituents of Yugoslavia, as a result of the Civil War in Bosnia and Herzegovina and other ethno-religious wars in the Balkans, has shown that despite the EU and other regional political and economic pacts where single countries seek membership, comfort or security, when contradictions are too deep, enmities too divisive and the ideological and / or religious gaps which separate them are too wide, the likelihood of forging them together into one single identity or nationhood is very flimsy.
- b. The accepted assumption during the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia that the Serbs and the Croats were united under Tito's Serbo-Croatian leadership, with Tito being a Croat by origin but electing to have his seat in Belgrade, and presiding over a state where the Serbo-Croatian tongue was the *lingua franca* of the Kingdom and then of the federal state, created the false image of the harmonious co-existence of its various docile peoples. When, in the sixties, the Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina advocated for their separate ethnic identity, on the basis of the principle of equality, they were accorded the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a place for their political activity, although altogether they constituted the minority there.
- c. The mutual intolerance as well as hatred between all the former Yugoslavian nationalities, especially among the three main components of the Socialist Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Serbs, Croats and Muslims) which had been compressed for the duration of the Yugoslavian state, exploded immediately once the limitations and restrictions were removed during the armed conflict which was kindled simultaneously in all parts of former Yugoslavia.
- d. The immediate *casus belli* for the Civil War in Bosnia and Herzegovina was the 1992 referendum for independence which ignored the explicit will of the Serbs of Bosnia and Herzegovina to stay in Yugoslavia, the country in which they had been living since 1918. The war in Bosnia and Herzegovina was essentially a civil and ethnic war among its three peoples – Muslims, Serbs, and Croats, in which the Serbs of Bosnia and Herzegovina were fighting to prevent what was considered a genocide like in 1941 and for

their human and civil rights as a constitutive people. In this sense, the war of Republika Srpska was a defensive war. On the other hand, the formation of the El Mudžahid Detachment as an official unit of the Seventh Muslim Brigade of the Third Corps of the Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina consisting of foreign terrorist fighters from all around the world, as well as their modus operandi, methods of propaganda dissemination, and links to international terrorist organizations reveal the character and the nature of the Civil War in Bosnia and Herzegovina from the point of view of the Muslim political and religious elite in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Alija Izetbegović, the SDA and the Bosnian ulama). In their eyes the Civil War in Bosnia and Herzegovina was undoubtedly a *jihad* for liberating Muslim lands from the infidels and establishing an Islamic State based on Sharia law in the Western Balkans. ARBiH was created as a tool of SDA and Islamized, and as such it was solidly mono-ethnic and Muslim, and therefore had no moral right to claim the task to secure national and social equality of all three RBiH nations.

- e. The newly internationally recognized state RBiH committed an act of aggression against the SFRY by attacking its army – the JNA - in the sense of Article 3 (d) of the Definition of Aggression under United Nations Resolution 3314. The “smoking gun” of this aggression is the “Directive to protect sovereignty and independence of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, strictly confidential №02/2-1,” of 12 April 1992. The Directive referred to the SDS, the legal political party of the Serb people with 72 seats in the RBiH Parliament as the “enemy,” and directed the ARBiH troops on the ground to attack the JNA and Serb Autonomous Regions with Serb population. Militarily and politically, the “Directive” was nothing less than a declaration of war against the SFRJ and its federal institution the JNA, as well as against the Serb people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Also, the new Croatian state made huge efforts to transfer the war to Bosnia and Herzegovina, in order to bring Muslims onto their side against the Serbs with the aim of obtaining a part of the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina for themselves as a result of the war.
- f. Sarajevo was the main geographical and operational area of combat operations of both the ARBiH and VRS. The VRS had no intention of taking the entire capital of Sarajevo, since this did not agree with the RS strategy of

the territorial and constitutional rearrangement of Bosnia and Herzegovina on the basis of the population census of 1991. The VRS chose the strategy of blockading Sarajevo in order to coerce the Muslim leadership to accept their terms of peace, by which the Republika Srpska was expected to receive territorial, political, and cultural autonomy. The RBiH government strategy was to deny any political and cultural autonomy to the Serbs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and to preserve Bosnia and Herzegovina as a unitary state. Any attempt at reasonable autonomy and constitutional rearrangement was seen by the SDA as an “ethnic division.” This strategy was selfish and retrograde in nature, and ran counter to the wishes of a very sizable portion of the population. The ARBiH was keen to preserve the whole of Sarajevo under its control for a variety of strategic political and military objectives, not least of which was to project Sarajevo as the symbol of unitary Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the ensuing struggle, the VRS succeeded in keeping a considerable part of Sarajevo under control.

- g. At the beginning of the war, the VRS clearly enjoyed superiority over ARBiH and HVO in armament, particularly in aviation, artillery and tanks, however in some territories VRS was unable to use them due to restrictions by the international community and in some due to the nature of combat. This superiority was lost by 1994. In early 1994, the CIA came to the conclusion that the ARBiH reached parity with the VRS in terms of armament and combat material. In terms of manpower, however, the ARBiH had been maintaining superiority over the VRS throughout the entire war.
- h. The cruelty of the war inevitably resulted in numerous crimes committed on all sides of the confrontation line. However, the SDA’s strategy was calculated to drive the Serb community out of Sarajevo. The SDA aided and abetted crimes committed against the Serb population of Sarajevo by numerous criminal gangs and ARBiH regular units. These included arbitrary arrests, incarceration in concentration camps, torture, rape, and murder. Coupled with the systematic anti-Serb propaganda and ethnic pressure, these crimes constituted a systematic ethnic cleansing campaign, which culminated in the exodus of Serbs from Sarajevo after the Dayton Peace Accords. This campaign took a terrible toll on the Serb community in Sarajevo. As a result of the targeted campaign of terror and intimidation, the vibrant pre-war Serb community in Sarajevo totally ceased to exist.

- i. In the Civil War in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbs of Republika Srpska of all political convictions were fighting against the threat of extermination and for self-determination and civil rights. They defended their rights to live in the constitutional and internationally recognized Yugoslavia in which they had been living for the past 70 years. The initial objective of the creation of Republika Srpska was the prevention of any possibility of experiencing a repetition of the events that took place during the Second World War that is the genocide committed against the Serbs in the Independent State of Croatia, and the secondary objective was the preservation of Yugoslavia. When Muslims and Croats rejected Yugoslavia, the objective of Republika Srpska changed from the preservation of Yugoslavia to the political and cultural autonomy and equal rights for the Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Bosnian Muslims, on the other hand, were fighting for the establishment of an independent Islamized state that should have been based on Sharia law, in which there would be no place for genuine political and cultural autonomy for Serbs. However, the failure to establish an Islamic state in Bosnia and Herzegovina was facilitated mainly by the United States, as such an outcome did not conform to American regional and global geopolitical interests. Instead, the United States insisted on establishing an EU-oriented, quasi-multi-ethnic federation that has mutated with time and proven to be completely dysfunctional in all ways. Facing such an outcome, radicals slightly modified their tactics and began gradually to develop and expand regional terrorist infrastructure.
- j. The political activity and the struggle to establish an Islamized state as a result of the Civil War in Bosnia and Herzegovina conducted by the Muslim political and religious leadership in Bosnia and Herzegovina was inspired by the Muslim Brotherhood ideology, the Iranian revolution and the creation of the Islamic Pakistani state. Alija Izetbegović, member of the organization *Young Muslims* acting for a certain period of time as a youth section of the Muslims association *El-Hidaje*, elaborated this vision in his Pan-Islamic political program called the *Islamic Declaration*, which subsequently became the political program of his political party SDA, the core of which was consisted of the former *Young Muslims* members. His son, Bakir Izetbegović, the SDA, and the Bosnian Islamic Religious Community headed by Mustafa Cerić continued to implement his vision.

- k. In this war Bosnian Muslims were supported by Islamic states (primarily Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Qatar), “humanitarian intervention” by the United States and NATO, and actions from other out-of-region states (United Kingdom and some EU countries) and non-state actors, specific entities within international organizations, such as the UN, NATO and OSCE, private military companies (especially Military Professional Resources Incorporated), global Islamic NGOs, trans-national banks and companies, intelligence services, international terrorist organizations, radical Islamic groups and so on.
- l. According to all criteria described in internationally established and applied definitions for the term *siege*, Sarajevo experienced a *blockade* rather than a *siege*. VRS Main Staff documents and the Sarajevo-Romanija Corps used the professional term *blockade*, while for PR purposes ARBiH and media used the historical term *siege*, which was professionally and historically misplaced. The main difference between *siege* and *blockade* is the choice of weapons by the attacking side. Historically, starvation has been the main weapon of a *siege*. However, because of the international relief effort and massive deliveries of humanitarian aid allowed by the VRS into Sarajevo, Sarajevo experienced no hunger, the primary weapon of any *siege*. UN-PROFOR control of the airport (29 June 1992) made it possible to establish a humanitarian air bridge, which, though frequently interrupted, operated throughout the entire war. In this sense, the *siege* of Sarajevo cannot stand any comparison with the *siege* of Leningrad between 1941 and 1944, and the *siege* of Sebastopol between 1941 and 1942. The *siege* of Leningrad by German, Finnish, and Spanish forces in WWII resulted in the deaths of up to about 1,500,000 soldiers and civilians due to starvation and bombardment.
- m. From 1992 to 1995, the Serbs in Sarajevo were subjected to a double blockade (both internal and external) and a campaign of terror planned at the highest level of the state by the SDA and carried out by a joint criminal enterprise that included all Bosniak state institutions. One of the specific aspects of this terror campaign was the creation of a vast network of private prisons, led by military units under the orders of the SDA, where the worst atrocities (torture and gang rapes) were committed. This campaign of terror was preceded and accompanied by a campaign of discrimination and demonization targeting Serbian citizens of Sarajevo, who were relegated to

the rank of excluded citizens.

- n. Radical Islamic regimes, notably the Wahhabis of Saudi Arabia, Iranian Shi'ites, and terrorist movements as Al-Qa'ida, have used the Civil War in Bosnia and Herzegovina to send in *mujahidin* and to train Bosniak scholars to lead radical groups in Sarajevo and across Bosnia, based on older Muslim radical thought and organizations like *Young Muslims* (Muslim organization established in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the 1930s and from its outset copying the ideology, organizational structure and *modus operandi* of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, operating as such and having close link with the Brotherhood) and *El-Hidaje* which had been active there since the 1930s.
- o. The developments during the Civil War in Bosnia and Herzegovina paved the way for the development and expansion of the contemporary regional terrorist infrastructure in the heart of Europe which *de facto* represents the cornerstone of the so called Balkan Caliphate, whose operational base consists of the “*paradžemati*” network, the *Wahhabi* settlements, the military terrorist camps, the constantly increasing network new mosques and Islamic schools, the regional network of international Islamic NGOs and international Islamic financial institutions, and Muslim political parties. The post-modern nature of Islamic fundamentalism (Pan-Islam), which forms the basis upon which the Balkan Caliphate is being built, is a direct threat to regional security and territorial integrity, especially that of such countries as Serbia, the Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, and Republika Srpska, but also to global security as well since it implies the strengthening of transnational Islamic structures and the elimination of national borders with a view to the integration of Islamic communities from all western countries into a single political Pan-Islamic space.
- p. It can definitely be determined that the image projected in the West of the Muslims as victims of the “evil Serbs” was promoted by the use of American public relations companies to boost their upgraded reputation. Such companies were also used by the Croats. Conversely, the Serbs were advertised as the infamous villains who deserved to be fought and destroyed. Accordingly, the former's atrocities were ignored or covered up, sometimes in collusion with the press, while the latter's activities were artificially ornated with manufactured “crimes” that were never perpetrated. The In-

ternational Court of Justice adjudicated the fact that there was no evidence of genocide against Bosnian Muslims committed on the whole territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Bosniak nationalist myth of the intended Serbian genocide of Bosnian Muslims has definitively been dispelled. During the Civil War in Bosnia and Hercegovina the goal was clear: the best way to support Bosniaks was not to provide them with humanitarian aid but to provide them with weapons in their “just war”. The communication campaigns designed by the American agency Rudder & Finn, and some others, initially for the benefit of the Croatian and Bosniak causes, and then only the Bosniaks’, represented the blockade of Sarajevo as a *siege* with polarizing information into the two categories of the victims (the Bosniaks) and the executioners (the Serbs). On the ground the *de facto* victims of this terrible war were the unfortunate people on all sides.

- q. Our analyses show that months before the outbreak of violent conflict key Western media participated in the manufacturing of a Manichean archetype of the fight between “Good” and “Evil”, in which the role of “Evil” was exclusively given to one side, the Serbian side. In such a constructed discourse the accompanying narrative was simple, and the processes of choosing one – right – side, policy formulation, and decision-making were intellectually and morally facilitated. This viewpoint on the wars and conflicts taking place during the process of the dissolution of Yugoslavia spread to the majority of Western countries and continued during the wars in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Serbs were predominantly portrayed in a negative context as attackers and aggressors, while Muslims/Bosniaks were portrayed exclusively as victims or as the side that was attacked. The media and NGOs played a major role in the campaign of demonization of Serbs by spreading false information and focusing their attention and compassion exclusively on the very real suffering of Muslim citizens while completely ignoring the suffering of Serbian citizens. There was a certain lack of interest among journalists for the research that would have given us a deeper perspective about some crucial events. Despite the huge number of texts about Sarajevo, the key part of investigative journalism has almost always been absent.
- r. If the referendum of 29 February 1992 was the *casus belli*, the Dayton Peace Accords, formally signed in Paris on 14 December 1995, were the

cause of the great exodus of Serbs from Sarajevo, from January to March 1996. After the Dayton Peace Accords, the Serbs in the Sarajevo municipalities (Grbavica, Ilijaš, Vogošća, Hadžići, Ilidža, Rajlovac, among others), which, in accordance with the mentioned agreement, belonged to the Muslim-Croat Federation, due to the implementing of the policy at the time aiming at destroying the Serb community in total in the part of Sarajevo under Muslim control, decided to leave the city, their houses, apartments and possessions, having no other choice. Also, they decided to take the bodies of their loved ones from local graves with them as they feared that their graves would be desecrated. The mass exodus of the citizens of Serbian nationality of the city of Sarajevo taking with them the exhumed remains of their loved ones was an unprecedented event in the history of civil wars. *De facto* the outlawing of Serb citizens in the part of the city of Sarajevo under Muslim control, which was reflected in the destruction of the Serb elite, forcible relocation of Serbs to camps and other places of detention, mass and systematic torture, rape and murder, seizure of their property, dismissal from work and other forms of torture (concrete examples can be found in the Report) resulted in the destruction of the Serb community in its entirety in this city, which directly led to this exodus.

- s. Almost all perpetrators of crimes against Serbian citizens have escaped justice with the active assistance of Bosniak state institutions. Perpetrators of war crimes and crimes against humanity against Serbs have benefited from exceptional leniency from judges and often complete impunity at both the international court (ICTY) and at courts in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Crimes against Serbs have never been qualified for what they were: war crimes and crimes against humanity. The obstacles to the restitution of illegally seized property (houses, farms, apartments, vehicles, valuables and so on) and the lack of compensation for the serious damage suffered (such as physical violence, layoffs, exposure to depleted uranium) are all part of this denial of justice. War crimes trials have resulted in acquittals due to the retraction, disappearance or murder of prosecution witnesses. Many of the witnesses called by the prosecution did not dare to continue their testimony, fearing for their lives and noting the inability of the court to protect them. Many suspects were not charged, while some were acquitted on appeal or had their sentences considerably reduced. The Serbs, however, were always

punished with the utmost severity, and one only has to compare the number of charges and the severity of the sentences against the different parties to the conflict to be convinced of the bias of this court.

- t. This denial of justice is a factor that aggravates the psychological after-effects on the victims and maintains tensions between communities. In the end, the Serbian population of a city that claims to be tolerant and multi-ethnic has been virtually eliminated by those who still claim to be the main victims of this conflict.
- u. Some 800 Serbs have been reported missing from the part of the city of Sarajevo controlled by the SDA. Institutions led by Bosniak SDA officials have made immense efforts to cover up the crimes committed against Serbian citizens. Until this date 260 Serbs have still not been found. The number of missing Serbs is probably higher because of entire families having been killed without a survivor being able to report it, these missing persons are neither identified nor counted.
- v. Victims of physical and psychological abuse, such as those associated with the Civil War in Bosnian and Herzegovina, have been viewed through the prism of this “white supremacist” perspective, with the more acceptable Whites, those associated with Western Europe, such as Slovenians, Croats, Bosniaks, being considered as more vulnerable to suffering than those supposed to be lesser Whites, such as Serbs, Jews, Roma, etc. According to this point of view, rape, torture, witnessing the murder or torture of one’s family has far more of an impact on Western or white victims of the Civil War in Bosnia and Herzegovina than on the lesser Whites, such as Serbs, Jews, and Roma.
- w. While any reassessment of the Civil War in Bosnian and Herzegovina is loudly dismissed as falsely based on the views of self-serving revisionists who want to maintain the adversarial victim versus offender model with its intransigent polar opposites, the fact remains that accurate assessments were made during the conflict itself only to be ignored or dismissed by the more powerful proxy nations that wanted to promote their own narrative of a singular aggressor forcing its will on a non-violent, innocent victim.
- x. Today, for those not having been directly involved in the conflict, the common narrative is that the “evil Serbs” then descended upon the peaceful

Bosniaks, and engaged in a campaign of killing and rape in their quest for a Greater Serbia. It was now the paternalistic duty of America, NATO, and the European Union to act as protectors for the hapless Bosniaks. This narrative of a conflict between aggressive Serbs and innocent Bosniaks is still adhered to today, as evidenced by the concerted media effort to constantly remind the world of the evils the Serbs perpetrated upon the peaceful Bosniaks, a narrative with little mention of the role the more so-called “civilized” northern Yugoslavians — the Slovenians and Croats, and their proxies — played in the conflict.

- y. People on all sides of the Balkan conflict, veterans and civilians alike, were subjected to war-related trauma, either directly or indirectly.
- z. Twenty-five years following the Dayton Accord ending the Bosnian conflict and the cessation of hostilities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, there remains a prominent narrative characterizing the Serbs as the wayward, truculent aggressors attacking the mostly innocent Bosniaks and to lesser degree Croats. This anti-Serb narrative has emerged as the acceptable, unchallenged version of the Civil War in Bosnian and Herzegovina, especially in major media outlets (TV, movies, books, academic papers, etc.). This version has also prejudiced “official” agencies, such as courts and supposedly, neutral NGOs and international organizations like the OSCE.

The long-term consequences for the concerned peoples and countries, for the powers who cared to meddle in those affairs as well as for the world public opinion at large, are as far-reaching and even more likely to extend into the indefinite future:

- a. It is very unlikely that the former Yugoslavian states will at any point decide to coalesce again into one unified or confederal/federal state.
- b. The Serbo-Croatian language, which used to constitute one single communicational and cultural space in major part of Yugoslavia, has split into several “national” languages (Serbian, Croatian, Montenegrin, and Bosnian/Bosniak) each claiming its originality and even extraneity from all the rest. Linguistic alienation produces in the long run ethnic, cultural, political and identity estrangement.
- c. The heavy residue of enmity and conflictual narratives about the past that remained between the various ethno-religious groups of former Yugoslavia

will in the long run prevent not only cooperative and amicable relations between the now independent states, but will also necessarily deepen the suspicion between them, like the incomprehensible and absurd controls erected on their boundaries, in places which were previously open and welcoming.

- d. As substantial cadres of radical Muslims have been groomed in Bosnia, based on a long succession of Jihad fighters and ideologues, the country has been growing and promoting itself as a hub of Islamic Salafi thought and activity aided by its Iranian and Turkish foreign supporters to achieve by open *daw'a* and diplomacy, and by covert subversive activity, including youth movements and secret military training. A whole terrorist Islamic infrastructure was developed in the region. Today, in the global Islamic terrorist organizations' networks, the Western Balkan region as a part of South East Europe is being used for recruiting new fighters, planning and preparing terrorist acts abroad, providing asylum to both local fighters returning from "hot spots" and foreign terrorist fighters non-residents of Balkan countries, and providing logistical, medical, social, ideological and political support for the activities of international terrorist groups. These activities are accompanied by the spread of radical Islam in the region, and from there throughout Europe. This regional Islamic terrorist network, with a center in Sarajevo having close links to the Muslim leadership in Sarajevo (more precisely, to the SDA and its satellite Muslim parties) and, as such, represents a direct security threat not only for the Balkans countries as part of southeast Europe and Europe as a whole, but to many countries and regions, such as Russia, the United States, Israel, the Middle East, Central Asia, and more.
- e. The anti-Serbian bias which has been established in the West, though harshly contended by Russia, will be very difficult to eliminate, in view of the abundance of fake texts and manufactured atrocities that were imputed to Serbs and concocted with the initiative of the American Administration and actively supported by the European press, rationalized *post-factum* by the active participation of NATO forces in the bombings of Serbia. Building on the actual Serbian atrocities like Srebrenica, it was expedient to take them as proof of the inherently bad character of the Serbs. Conversely, many acts of horror against the Serbs, which are described and documented throughout the chapters of this Report, have been intentionally ignored or whitewashed in the Western media, thus unfairly laying the burden of blame on the Serbs.

To have redressed the balance of truth will have been the chief achievement of this Commission of Inquiry. Only an objective examination of the conflict employing a non-selective process of restorative justice will serve to reduce the degree of human suffering to a minimum and eventually lead to reconciliation.

The General Conclusions are an integral and inherent part of the Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Suffering of Serbs between 1991 to 1995.

Signatures:

Viktor Bezruchenko

Darko Tanasković

Laurence Armand French

Giuseppe Zaccaria

Patrick Barriot

The image shows four handwritten signatures, each written over a horizontal line. From top to bottom: 1. A cursive signature that appears to be 'Viktor Bezruchenko'. 2. A cursive signature that appears to be 'Darko Tanasković'. 3. A cursive signature that clearly reads 'Laurence Armand French'. 4. A cursive signature that appears to be 'Patrick Barriot'.