
MILOSEVIC IN THE HAGUE: WHAT IT MEANS FOR YUGOSLAVIA AND THE REGION

OVERVIEW

On 28 June 2001, St Vitus's Day – an anniversary with enormous resonance in Yugoslavia – Serbian government transferred former Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic to The Hague. By this bold political move, the government demonstrated in the clearest way its will to break with the past. With the timing driven by the international donors conference scheduled for 29 June, the transfer also confirmed the effectiveness of conditioning economic assistance to Yugoslavia on concrete political progress.

This ICG report describes the background to the transfer, how it was carried out, the internal political fallout, and what it all means for the future of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) and the wider region.

The disintegration of the federal government the day after the transfer showed that Milosevic's removal from the country had rocked the Yugoslav political structures to their foundations. The ruling Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DOS) coalition has been traumatised by the process that led up to the transfer, and may not survive to contest the next elections.

Federal President Kostunica is trying to form a new federal government, but this may prove impossible without new federal elections – something he wishes to avoid, in part because the outcome would be impossible to foresee. It would hinge on Montenegro's governing coalition, which boycotted the last federal elections (in September 2000) but might not do so next time, if prior agreement on reshaping the Serbia-Montenegro relationship could be reached with the DOS

coalition. There are signs that Serbian Premier Djindjic and Montenegrin President Djukanovic could reach such an agreement, over the heads of the federal presidency and government.

There has been a striking growth of pro-independence sentiment among Serbs themselves – a development that has large implications for the FRY. In the minds of the Serbian government, probably the only glue keeping the Yugoslav federation (FRY) together is the fear – whether or not legally well-founded – that, if the FRY dissolves, Kosovo's independence will inevitably follow. The need to reshape the federation has never seemed more urgent. Should the EU, the U.S., and the FRY prove unable to redefine their policies and roles in a meaningful manner, the dissolution of the “third Yugoslavia” will not be long in coming.

Despite rather muted responses in Croatia and Bosnia, there is little question that Milosevic's transfer will have an impact among Serbia's neighbours. International pressure for the delivery of Croatian indictees will increase sharply, and the Tribunal's prosecutor should be expected to turn her attention to the Bosnian Muslims. The omens that Bosnian Serb indictees such as Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic will finally face justice at The Hague seem more promising than ever. These developments have the potential to improve ethnic relations and accelerate normalisation in the war-affected zones.

Sadly, the place currently most in need of such benefits – namely, Macedonia – seems the least likely to enjoy them. Macedonia was spared from inter-ethnic violence during the decade of Milosevic's power, and his definitive removal from the scene will do nothing to alleviate the potential for spiralling conflict there.

I. BACKGROUND

The political furore caused by the transfer of Slobodan Milosevic to The Hague on 28 June 2001 - described in detail in this briefing paper - was hardly unexpected. Since taking power following the 24 September and 23 December 2000 elections, members of the DOS coalition have displayed sharp differences in regard to cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. (ICTY).¹

Under internal pressure from DOS and external pressure from the international community, the federal government adopted a statement on 14 February 2001 that it would so cooperate. However, immediately prior to and following this, both Kostunica and federal Prime Minister Zoran Zizic announced that the FRY would make its own determination of what cooperation required, adding that this did not necessarily mean transferring indictees or turning over documents.

Kostunica continued to demonstrate reluctance about ICTY cooperation even after his 9 May 2001 trip to Washington and New York, during which he met with President Bush and Secretary of State Powell.² Yet, during this visit he reportedly promised Powell that Milosevic would be extradited.³

It became obvious that in order to get U.S. participation at the donors conference scheduled for 29 June 2001 and ensure adequate EU economic assistance, FRY would have to begin cooperating with the Tribunal. For Kostunica this meant passing a federal level law on cooperation. The law - which had heretofore been held up - was drafted and given to the federal coalition partners in early June. Yet from the moment the draft was shown to the Socialist People's Party (SNP) it was apparent that the party would not vote

for the law in the federal parliament. Without SNP votes, DOS would be unable to pass the law. Meanwhile the clock was ticking towards 29 June, and the U.S. had yet to confirm its attendance at the donors conference.

On 4 June 2001, the SNP rejected the draft law and suggested that legislation should be adopted on the Republic level. The Serbian Republic authorities attempted to push the federal government to resolve the issue. At the same time, some members of DOS began to hint that if the federal government would not do so, they would take it upon themselves. Federal Minister of the Interior Zoran Zivkovic went so far as to say that cooperation would take place without a law, if necessary.⁴

DOS continued to try and persuade the Montenegrins, but to no avail. On 18 June 2001, with the donors conference only eleven days away, the U.S. still not committed to attend, and U.S. Ambassador William Montgomery exerting fierce pressure on Kostunica, Djindjic and the SNP,⁵ the SNP reiterated that it would not vote for the law. At this point President Kostunica's party, the Democratic Party of Serbia (DSS) - which had been almost silent - came out clearly and stated that the SNP must vote for the law in the interest of protecting the federal state.⁶ By the next day reality had sunk in, and DOS began considering other options, including passing a Republic law. Some DOS members called on Kostunica to use his speech to the parliamentary deputies - scheduled for 21 June - to explain to the nation why the law was needed and use his popularity to gain public support.⁷

International pressure on the federal and Serbian governments to demonstrate cooperation with the ICTY intensified. In an effort to placate it, Kostunica declared during a 20 June trip to Budapest that the FRY would adopt the law by the end of the month. Upon his return to Belgrade,

¹ Readers wishing for more information and analysis concerning these differences are referred to the recent ICG reports ICG Balkans Reports No. 108, *After Milosevic. A Practical Agenda for Lasting Balkans Peace*, 2 April 2001, and No. 112, *A Fair Exchange: Aid to Yugoslavia for Regional Stability*, 15 June 2001.

² "Obezbediti mehanizme da Hag ne bude pravno nedodirljiv", *Radio B92*, 26 May 2001.

³ ICG interview with U.S. State Department official.

⁴ "Zivkovic: ako nuzda natera, do saradnje i bez zakona", *Radio B92*, 5 June 2001.

⁵ ICG interview with U.S. State Department sources.

⁶ "DSS pozvao SNP da pokaze odgovornost prema SRJ", *Radio B92*, 18 June 2001.

⁷ "Kolundzija: Kostunica mora da se obrati gradjanima", *Radio B92*, 19 June 2001.

Kostunica refused to elaborate on this with the domestic media.⁸ Djindjic, meanwhile, stated that DOS would have to find an alternative solution.⁹ The next day, when it became obvious that the SNP would not buckle, DOS began discussing the need for the federal government to issue a decree regulating cooperation with The Hague.

In the face of media speculation and increasing international pressure, and with the SNP having declared opposition to such a step, the federal government passed the decree on Saturday, 23 June, six days before the donors conference. The provisions were essentially the same as in the draft law.¹⁰ The same day Djindjic stated that under the new decree, it would take at least fifteen to twenty days to transfer Milosevic to The Hague.¹¹

On Monday, 25 June, U.S. participation at the donors conference scheduled for that Friday was still uncertain. Many inside Serbia were conscious that in order for the donors conference to be both a political and financial success, a significant gesture was needed vis-à-vis the ICTY. Milosevic's lawyers filed two complaints with the Constitutional Court. One asked it to enjoin implementation until it could rule on the decree's constitutionality. The other asked the Court to find the decree unconstitutional. That day Kostunica spoke out, stating that "extradition is the lesser evil". Later that evening, federal Justice Minister Momcilo Grubac began the legal procedure prescribed in the decree to transfer Milosevic.

As it became apparent that the Milosevic-appointed Constitutional Court judges would probably overturn the decree as unconstitutional, DOS members began to speculate in the media that Milosevic could be in The Hague by Friday, 29 June. Verbal sparring between Kostunica and the remainder of DOS continued until the actual transfer, with Kostunica taking the position that law, the decree, and the Constitutional Court had to be respected in all aspects. Others argued that this

approach might allow the process to continue indefinitely without any transfers.

Given the suspicions about the Constitutional Court's eventual decisions, DOS was enveloped in crisis. Many felt that a further gesture towards the international community and ICTY was needed urgently. On Tuesday, 26 June, Kostunica repeated that Milosevic would not be transferred before the donors conference at the end of the week.

In this context, and given the inability of the federal organs to act, Serbia's Republic government went into a series of urgent consultations, culminating in the Milosevic transfer. Publicly available information indicates that Kostunica and all members of DOS were well informed of these consultations, and that members of all political parties in the coalition participated in this process.

⁸ "Kostunica: zakon do kraja juna", *Radio B92*, 20 June 2001.

⁹ "Djindjic: DOS mora da pronadje alternativno resenje", *Radio B92*, 20 June 2001.

¹⁰ "Uredba o postupku sa Haskim tribunalom", *Blic*, 24 June 2001.

¹¹ "Djindjic: za izrucenje potrebno 15-20 dana", *Radio B92*, 23 June 2001.

II. ST VITUS'S DAY 1389-2001

Throughout the humid afternoon of Thursday, 28 June 2001, Belgrade had been abuzz with rumours and speculation as to what – if anything – the Serbian Republic government of Premier Zoran Djindjic might do about Milosevic.

Earlier in the day the federal Constitutional Court had temporarily blocked implementation of the federal government's decree regulating cooperation with the ICTY under which the Serbian Republic government had begun the procedure to transfer Milosevic to The Hague.

At a press conference on Tuesday, 26 June, Milosevic's successor, FRY President Vojislav Kostunica, had shown his continued public reluctance to cooperate with the ICTY by indicating he believed nothing should be done about transferring Milosevic until the federal Constitutional Court had completed its consideration of the Milosevic legal team's appeal against the decree. On Thursday morning Djindjic stated clearly that if the Constitutional Court overturned the federal decree, his government would cooperate with the ICTY on the basis of the Tribunal's Statute, and not on the basis of the FRY constitution.¹² Federal Premier Zoran Zizic responded that if the Serbian government transferred anyone to The Hague, then his party, the pro-Milosevic SNP (the leading opposition party in Montenegro), would pull out of its uneasy federal government coalition with DOS.¹³

The donors conference sponsored by the World Bank and the European Commission, at which the FRY hoped to receive pledges of some U.S. \$1.2 billion badly needed to rescue its devastated and nearly bankrupt economy, was scheduled for the following day (29 June) in Brussels.¹⁴ The federal Constitutional Court's provisional ruling provoked

widespread concern in Belgrade that potential donors would now reduce or even withhold their pledges.

Facing the Yugoslav federal government's unwillingness to expedite cooperation with The Hague Tribunal, the Serbian Republic government met in emergency session at 4 p.m. on Thursday, 28 June. The meeting had been delayed by one hour to permit Minister of Health Obren Joksimovic, a member of the DSS, to participate. The DSS is Kostunica's own, strongly nationalist party. It had not attended an emergency session of the Serbian government the previous evening, claiming "technical reasons". At the Thursday meeting, 21 of the 23 members of the Serbian government put their signatures to a decision authorising the immediate transfer of Milosevic to The Hague.¹⁵

A. THE SHELL GAME

When he was informed of the plan, the director of Belgrade's central prison, Dragan Blanus, initially resisted releasing Milosevic to State Security (DB) forces, claiming that he needed a court order.¹⁶ But, under pressure from the Republic Justice Minister, Vladan Batic, he broke the news to Milosevic, telling him to prepare his personal belongings because he was leaving the prison. When asked by Milosevic where he was going, Blanus responded: "To The Hague".¹⁷

Fearing a possible confrontation with the Yugoslav Army (VJ), the Republic government began an elaborate "shell game" to confuse the VJ and Milosevic supporters.¹⁸ Shortly after 6:15 p.m., three police vans pulled out of the prison compound. One went to the Belgrade civilian airport at Surcin, another to the military airport at Batajnica, and the third to a heliport at the State Security (DB) compound in Belgrade's Banjica district. Only one van held Slobodan Milosevic. As part of the shell game a small aircraft from

¹² "Djindjic: saradnja na osnovu statuta haskog tribunala", *Radio B92*, 28 June, 2001.

¹³ "Ukoliko dos izruci bilo koga, snp raskida koaliciju", *Radio B92*, 28 June 2001.

¹⁴ For a discussion of the state of Serbia's economy and the need for foreign assistance, see ICG Balkans Report No. 112, *A Fair Exchange: Aid to Yugoslavia for Regional Stability*, 15 June 2001.

¹⁵ "Vlada srbije potvrdila ekstradiciju Milosevica", *Radio B92*, 28 June 2001.

¹⁶ ICG interview with a member of the government.

¹⁷ "Kako je Sloba odveden u Hag", *Nedeljni telegraf*, special edition, 29 June 2001.

¹⁸ ICG interview with a member of the government.

Montenegro waited at the Surcin airport, allegedly to transport Milosevic to The Hague.¹⁹

Yet Milosevic would not see an aeroplane for several more hours. His van drove him to the Banjica heliport, where the DB turned him over to representatives of the Tribunal, who put him on a helicopter for a flight to the SFOR (Stabilisation Force) base near Tuzla in neighbouring Bosnia and Herzegovina.²⁰ Leaving Serbian soil for what may have been the last time, Milosevic turned to his DB guards and said ironically: "Brother Serbs, goodbye. I congratulate you on a job well done".²¹ From Bosnia, a NATO transport plane took him to The Hague.

Word of the transfer broke in a 6:30 p.m. news broadcast on Karic Brothers Television (BKTV), but was unconfirmed. Half an hour later, at 7:00 p.m., Nemanja Kolesar, the spokesman for Djindjic, told a press conference that the Serbian government had indeed transferred Milosevic to the custody of the Tribunal. Following this announcement, Djindjic himself told the reporters that the government had undertaken the transfer for three reasons. First, the government refused to accept the ruling of the Constitutional Court, a body composed of the "same people who had cancelled the September [2000] election" at the order of Slobodan Milosevic, and one of whom had participated in Milosevic's electoral theft in 1996.²² Second was the possible impact on the donors conference and related economic and financial issues. Djindjic stated that the Constitutional Court decision would bring the country to the brink of economic collapse, endanger rescheduling of the country's crushing foreign debt burden and block its membership in international financial institutions. Third was that FRY refusal to cooperate with the Tribunal would threaten Serbia with international isolation and jeopardise its very future.

¹⁹ Djindjic strahovao da ce vojska spreciti izrucenje", *Danas*, 2 July 2001.

²⁰ According to a government official, Milosevic was transported to Tuzla in the same helicopter that, twelve years before to the day, had flown him to Gazimestan in Kosovo (see above). ICG interview.

²¹ "Kako je Sloba odveden u Hag", *Nedeljni telegraf*, special edition, 29 June 2001.

²² "Vlada srbije potvrdila ekstradiciju Milosevica", *Radio B92*, 28 June 2001.

As its legal rationale, the government invoked Article 135 of the Serbian Constitution, which gives Serbia the right to override the Yugoslav constitution if its interests are endangered.²³ Ironically, when the current constitution was adopted in September 1990, Article 135 was seen as one of Milosevic's measures to ensure that Serbia would not be constrained by the federation or by other republics.²⁴

B. ON THE STREET

In Belgrade the reaction to the transfer was muted. Beginning around 8 p.m., an angry and mostly elderly crowd of approximately 3,000 gathered on Republic Square, where they waved flags, shouted slogans, broke the windows on several passing cars and busses and assaulted two journalists. Vojislav Seselj, leader of the extreme nationalist Serbian Radical Party (SRS), addressed the demonstrators and called for another demonstration the next day in front of the federal Parliament. The crowd was very small in comparison to the tens of thousands who had gathered in front of Belgrade's City Hall three days earlier to greet the Yugoslav water-polo team that had just won the European championship. It was also far smaller than the Socialist Party of Serbia's (SPS, Milosevic's political party) rally of some 10,000 people, bussed the previous evening to the same spot to protest against ICTY cooperation. By midnight fewer than a dozen Milosevic supporters remained, wind and light rain having driven the rest home.

The mood on the street was mixed. Although the majority seemed to support Milosevic's transfer, most expressed anger at the timing, coming as it did on St Vitus's day, 28 June, the date of the 1389 Battle of Kosovo. St Vitus's day is also the anniversary of the assassination of Austro-Hungarian Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife Sophie in Sarajevo in 1914, at the hands of a young Bosnian Serb, so touching off the First World War. Seven years later, in 1921, the St

²³ ICG interview with member of government.

²⁴ For a discussion of this point, see Lenard J. Cohen, *Broken Bonds. Yugoslavia's Disintegration and Balkan Politics in Transition* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2nd edition, 1995), pp. 125-126.

Vitus Day Constitution was adopted in Belgrade, an event seen by some as dooming the first Yugoslav state to internecine rivalry and violence.²⁵ On this date in 1948, Tito's Yugoslavia was expelled at Stalin's behest from the Communist Information Bureau (Cominform). It was also on this day in 1989 that Slobodan Milosevic addressed up to one million Serbs at Gazimestan in Kosovo to commemorate the six-hundredth anniversary of the Kosovo Battle. That speech contained the first open threat of violent conflict by a Socialist Yugoslav leader: "Six centuries later, again, we are in battles and quarrels. They are not armed battles, although such things cannot be excluded".²⁶ In 2001, St Vitus's day once again marked the end of an era.

Many Serbs were disappointed by the transfer, which they considered one more indication that their justice system and federal institutions had failed. They seemed to view it as a national disgrace that Serbia had been incapable of trying and convicting Milosevic, and only then perhaps transferring him to The Hague. Others were angered that Milosevic was transferred by what they considered extra-constitutional methods. Nearly everyone appeared disappointed that local courts would not get a chance to put him on trial for his misdeeds – both real and imagined – against the Serbs.²⁷

Although there appeared to be near unanimous agreement among Serbia's politicians – Kostunica included – that Milosevic should be put on trial, most felt this should be done at home and for his crimes against his own people. Many Serbs wished to see Milosevic tried on charges of domestic criminal activity (financial malfeasance and other abuses of power, including the assassination of political enemies). There were also some who felt he should be punished for having failed to achieve "Greater Serbia", an

expansionist project for which many had voted repeatedly during the 1990s.²⁸

Many powerful domestic political forces not only opposed transferring Milosevic to The Hague for the melange of reasons described above, but are likely to continue to oppose other transfers. Very many Serbs continue to regard indictees such as wartime Bosnian Serb leaders Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic as heroes.²⁹ Zoran Djindjic and a key group of moderates gathered around him are acutely aware that the U.S. and EU are prepared to place restrictions on Yugoslav membership and participation in key international organisations, such as the IMF or the World Bank, should Yugoslavia not cooperate with ICTY. Djindjic appears willing to gamble that the immediate unpopularity of explicit cooperation will soon enough be outweighed by the longer term benefits.

²⁵ See, e.g. Ivo Banac, *The National Question in Yugoslavia. Origins, History, Politics* (Cornell University Press, 1988 edition), pp. 403-405.

²⁶ Quoted in Julie Mertus, *Kosovo: How Myths and Truths Started a War* (University of California Press, 1999), p. 185.

²⁷ ICG interviews with FRY citizens.

²⁸ For breakdowns of how Serbs voted during the Milosevic era, see Robert Thomas, *Serbia under Milosevic: Politics in the 1990s*, London: Hurst, 1999.

²⁹ See the Strategic Marketing public opinion poll commissioned by B92, "Perception of Truth in Serbia", May 2001.

III. THE INTERNAL POLITICAL FALLOUT

A. A WIDENING GAP

As expected, federal President Kostunica immediately attacked the Republican government for transferring Milosevic, calling it “illegal and unconstitutional”, while claiming that no one in the international community had sought this measure and that such actions would not lead to better relations with Europe or the world. He also claimed that he had not been consulted on the issue.³⁰ DSS official Dusan Prorokovic stated that the party had been “surprised” by the move.³¹ The position of Kostunica and the DSS was that they had not been informed by the other members of DOS in advance of the transfer, nor had they consented to it. DSS governing board member Miroljub Ljesnjak stated that the DSS would seek new elections on both the federal and Republic levels.³² DSS also announced that it would form its own members’ caucus in the Republic parliament.³³

The efforts of Kostunica and the DSS to distance themselves from the transfer drew accusations of “hypocrisy” from other members of DOS.³⁴ Dragan Veselinov, leader of the Vojvodina coalition, pointed out that the Republic Minister of Health, Obren Joksimovic of the DSS, had indeed been present at the emergency meeting on Thursday, and had informed Kostunica after it concluded.³⁵

On Saturday, 30 June, Kostunica lashed back, claiming again that he had no advance knowledge of the transfer, and that the first official news he received had arrived in his office at 7:15 p.m. on Thursday. He claimed he had never spoken in

favour of transferring Milosevic or anyone else to The Hague Tribunal at a single DOS meeting, and had always insisted that “torturous cooperation should have a legal foundation”.³⁶ This statement was immediately discredited by leaked transcripts of a telephone conversation between Djindjic and Kostunica, in which Kostunica – faced with Djindjic’s threat to resign – clearly says “yes” to transferring Milosevic to The Hague.³⁷ Given the overwhelming outcry from other DOS members, Kostunica and DSS conceded that “perhaps” they had been informed of the decision in advance.³⁸

In the meantime, the DSS began stating that it would seek the reconstruction of the Republic government, in which it held only one ministry.³⁹ Informed sources claimed that the DSS wanted control over the Ministry of the Interior (police) and the Ministry of Justice, which would enable it to block future cooperation with the ICTY.⁴⁰

B. THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FALLS

On Friday, 29 June 2001, Yugoslav Premier Zoran Zizic and other members of the SNP party made good on their threat and resigned from the federal government, causing it to collapse. Although many viewed the SNP as an undesirable coalition partner, DOS had been forced to accept the party following the 24 September 2000 elections. Not only did the SNP hold the balance in the federal parliament between DOS and the pro-Milosevic bloc of Serbian parties, but according to the FRY constitution, if the federal president comes from Serbia, as Kostunica does, the federal prime minister must come from Montenegro. The SNP knew that if it refused to enter into a coalition, the future of the FRY would have been at risk.⁴¹ Also,

³⁰ “Kostunica: nezakonito i neustavno”, *Radio B92*, 28 June 2001.

³¹ “DSS zatecena”, *Radio B92*, 28 June 2001.

³² “Ljesnjak/DSS/: za izbore na svim nivoima”, *Radio B92*, 28 June, 2001.

³³ “DSS: rekonstrukcija republike vlade”, *Radio B92*, 29 June 2001.

³⁴ “Nova Demokratije: zacudjuce licemerje”, *Radio B92*, 29 June 2001.

³⁵ “Veselinov, Kostunica znao”, *Radio B92*, 29 June 2001.

³⁶ “Kostunica demantuje da je znao za izrucenje”, *Radio B92*, 30 June 2001.

³⁷ “Kostunica rekao ‘da’”, *Nedeljni telegraf*, special edition 30 June 2001.

³⁸ “DSS: Joksimovic je mozda obavestio Kostunicu”, *Radio B92*, 2 July 2001.

³⁹ “DSS zatrazila rekonstrukciju vlade Srbije”, *Blic*, 29 June 2001.

⁴⁰ “DSS trazi smenu Batica i Mihajlovica”, *Danas*, 2 June 2001.

⁴¹ See ICG Balkans Report No.197, *Montenegro Settling for Independence*, 28 March 2001, and ICG Balkans Briefing, *Montenegro: Time to Decide*, 18 April, 2001.

as an opposition party in Montenegro, the SNP realised that its only chance to hold office and influence politics was at the federal level. Many DOS leaders have concluded that a federation dependent on the SNP, and without participation of Montenegro's majority parties, cannot be preserved in the long term.

In its role as federal government coalition partner, the SNP – occasionally working behind the scenes with Kostunica⁴² – effectively stymied some of the efforts of the pragmatic elements in DOS to institute reforms, particularly for cooperation with The Hague. However, for all practical purposes the federal government functions as a Serbian entity, the legitimacy of which with respect to Montenegro is not recognised by the Montenegrin authorities. While Zizic formally carried out the duties of federal premier, the main practical effect of the SNP's participation in the federal government and of its alliance with Kostunica, along with other pro-Yugoslav Montenegrin parties, has been the access to resources and funds to support their activities in Montenegro.⁴³ As this briefing goes to press, the SNP continues to call for new elections but Kostunica is attempting to reconstitute a federal government without such a vote.

C. THE FUTURE OF DOS

The Milosevic transfer simply brought into the open a polarisation within DOS that has been developing since the October 2000 revolution. This polarisation occurred between two camps, defined by Djindjic as “two concepts, one stabilising and the other reformist”.⁴⁴

The stabilisers include old-school nationalists as well as significant elements from Milosevic's SPS who have been hurrying to join Kostunica's DSS. They rely heavily for support on the Army and members of the old political elite who still hold posts within the government bureaucracy or police, or who operate in some of the parallel security

structures organised under the Milosevic regime. They also find support from the SNP, the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SANU), the Orthodox Church (SPC), and, from time to time, the SPS and Vojislav Seselj's Serbian Radical Party (SRS). The only DOS government minister in the stabilisers' camp is the controversial Republic Minister of Health, Obren Joksimovic, of the DSS.

The “go slow” policy generally favoured by Kostunica and the DSS has made it difficult for the reformist camp in DOS to clear away the dead wood from the Milosevic regime. The reformists appear in many respects nearly as sensitive to painful national issues – such as ICTY cooperation and Kosovo – as the stabilisers. The difference is that they acknowledge the need to move the country out of international isolation and into full membership in the international community. A prime example of this was Serbian Republic Deputy President Nebojsa Covic's highly publicised peace plan for southern Serbia, drawn up at the start of the year. Under this plan, the government worked closely with NATO and UNMIK to defuse the tense situation in the Presevo region. The pragmatist camp includes all the DOS ministers on the Republic level other than Joksimovic, and as the five Republic vice-presidents. In addition many DOS officials in the recently resigned federal government, such as Miroslav Labus (Deputy Premier), Momcilo Grubac (Minister of Justice), Zoran Zivkovic (Minister of the Interior), and Goran Svilanovic (Foreign Minister) fall into this category.

These camps have had numerous small public skirmishes. In spite of this, Djindjic and Kostunica have appeared to get along relatively well in public and also, according to numerous reports, privately.⁴⁵ One reason is that they usually address different sets of political questions. The only areas where their policy interests have truly overlapped appear to have been in relation to the ICTY, appointments of governing boards to state-owned enterprises, and purges of Milosevic supporters from the Yugoslav Army. Kostunica has concentrated on issues of state such as borders and national symbolism, while Djindjic has concentrated on economic and social reforms.

⁴² “Kostunica nas nagovarao da opstruiramo izglasavanje zakona, pa se povukao”, *Nedeljni telegraf*, 13 June 2001.

⁴³ For example, the formation of a FRY government office in Podgorica in January 2001 (*Vijesti*, 31 January 2001).

⁴⁴ “Kostunica mora biti jak predsednik”, *Blic*, 3 July 2001.

⁴⁵ ICG interviews with members of the governments.

Disagreements have been relatively rare, and usually arise in the context of cooperation with ICTY.

Other than the ICTY, the major arguments in public have concerned the army. These have focused in large part on the Chief of Staff, General Nebojsa Pavkovic, who is potentially indictable for his actions in Kosovo during 1999. Since the October revolution many members of DOS and the Serbian public have criticised Kostunica openly for not removing Pavkovic. Many in DOS charge that Pavkovic is protecting hardliners in the army and the government, as well as the Milosevic legacy. The pragmatists within DOS began to force the question of Pavkovic's tenure through the media with revelations about a refrigerator truck full of Kosovo Albanian corpses that had been driven from Kosovo during 1999 and dumped in the Danube in April 1999. As the stories played out, it became apparent that a number of such trucks had been driven north, and mass graves began to be uncovered on the outskirts of Belgrade and in other areas of Serbia. The question being asked of Pavkovic was: what was the army's role in these deaths and mass graves? How much did Pavkovic know and when?

This quarrel enlarged when Pavkovic removed General Ninoslav Krstic from command of the Yugoslav armed forces in southern Serbia. Krstic had overseen the reintroduction of Yugoslav authority into the tense southern Serbian region around Presevo, in May 2001. Working in close cooperation with Serbian Republic Deputy Premier Nebojsa Covic, he coordinated the activities of the Yugoslav armed forces with NATO and other international officials and negotiators, and oversaw a largely peaceful transition from Albanian guerrilla control. He had gained a positive reputation among international and Serbian officials and had kept the Yugoslav police and Army on a tight leash when they re-entered the buffer zone in southern Serbia. The removal of Krstic caused heavy direct and indirect criticism of both Pavkovic and Kostunica. In the end Kostunica compromised by decorating both Krstic and Pavkovic on the same day, then giving Krstic command of the entire southern Serbia region.

During the run-up to the Milosevic transfer and since, these splits within DOS have deepened and solidified. DOS appears now to have definitively

polarised into two camps. DSS enjoys greater popularity than any other party in the original DOS coalition, but this standing is based primarily on Kostunica's personal popularity. As a party, DSS lacks experienced leadership and organisation. It also lacks any real power in the day-to-day governing structures inside Serbia. The other seventeen parties in DOS have coalesced around the pragmatists and Djindjic.

On the whole, Kostunica's image and that of the DSS may have suffered during the entire Milosevic transfer. This is in large part due to the widespread perception that Kostunica was playing a game of "good cop, bad cop" with Djindjic on the ICTY issue, and that he had lied to the people and refused to accept responsibility for his part in the decision to hand over Milosevic. This is a charge lodged not only by the DOS pragmatists, but also by SRS leader Vojislav Seselj. There was resentment that he had acted weakly and had failed to use his personal prestige and popularity or the bully pulpit of his office to push matters along. Serbian popular culture does not respect weak leaders, and seems to prefer a strong figure who takes unpopular actions. Djindjic has attempted to capitalise on this perception, indirectly criticising Kostunica's performance by saying that "we need a strong president...we don't need a weak Kostunica."⁴⁶

In spite of the split and Djindjic's implied criticism of Kostunica's behaviour in the entire Milosevic transfer affair, an early showdown may not be Djindjic's preferred choice. If so challenged, Kostunica would likely seek early federal and Republic elections from which – given his high personal popularity – he and DSS could emerge strengthened. On the other hand, Kostunica does not appear inclined to seek early elections, as these could further weaken the already enfeebled federal structures, something he wishes to avoid at all costs. As a result DOS will continue to function both on the federal and Republic levels, although the split with the DSS will probably continue to grow. The DSS is expected to run as a separate party in any upcoming elections.

⁴⁶ "Kostunica mora biti jak predsednik", *Blic*, 3 July 2001.

IV. WHAT THE CRISIS MEANS FOR THE FRY

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia – with its two constituent republics of Serbia (including Kosovo) and Montenegro – exists increasingly on paper alone, and even this paper is fraying.

The events surrounding the transfer of Milosevic to The Hague have served only to accelerate this process.

A. MONTENEGRO

The crisis at the federal level caused by Milosevic's transfer sharpens the existing political crisis in Montenegro. The Montenegrin parliament finally approved a new government on 2 July 2001, following the inconclusive parliamentary elections of 22 April 2001. This minority government of the pro-independence Democratic Party of Socialists (DPS) and Social Democratic Party (SDP) relies for support on the Liberal Alliance of Montenegro (LSCG). The key condition for LSCG support is that the government presses ahead with plans for an independence referendum, to be held, according to the agreement between the three parties, by January 2002. The LSCG has already shown itself a highly unreliable partner, constantly sniping at the DPS, expressing total lack of trust that the party and its leader, President Milo Djukanovic, will fulfil their promises either to realise the independence project or to carry out democratic reforms.⁴⁷ Thus the Montenegrin government is highly unstable and its survival even until January 2002 is in serious doubt.

Given the lack of a broad consensus in favour of independence, as demonstrated by the 22 April 2001 election results, it is very difficult for the Montenegrin authorities to press ahead with their plans. However, given that pro-independence

parties did win a narrow majority, it is politically impossible for them to abandon the independence aspiration, especially given the government's dependence on the LSCG. Thus, Montenegro faces the possibility of a drawn-out period of political instability and paralysis. The most satisfactory solution for Montenegro would be to find a way to remove the independence issue from the top of the political agenda and to end the government's dependence on the unreliable LSCG.

It is possible that the upheaval in Belgrade could become a catalyst for the resolution, at least in the medium term, of Montenegro's political crisis. The political dynamics within Serbia's DOS coalition may prove decisive in determining how matters will play out. Djukanovic appears to hope that agreement on Montenegrin independence, followed perhaps by the formation of a loose association of independent states, can be reached with Belgrade. This would provide a neat exit from the dead-end that the independence project now faces in Montenegro. In the context of the widening differences between Kostunica and Djindjic, Djukanovic appears to hope that agreement can be reached with his long-standing ally, Djindjic, to remodel the relationship between Montenegro and Serbia. If Podgorica and Belgrade can agree on separation, so the logic goes, continued opposition within Montenegro to independence would lose all sense. In such a scenario, Montenegro's independence could be achieved relatively quickly, thus resolving Montenegro's domestic political crisis at the same time.

Many in DOS argue that the federation is only viable if parties with majority support in Montenegro (i.e. the DPS) participate in federal institutions. According to this argument, new federal elections would only make sense if the DPS were to participate. Such a solution would have many attractions. DOS and the DPS, former allies in opposition to Milosevic and both professing commitment to reforms, would appear to be the most natural partners from Serbia and Montenegro. The inclusion of the DPS would breathe new life into federal institutions and end DOS's unsatisfactory reliance on the SNP.

In Montenegro, any such arrangement would undoubtedly end LSCG support for the republic government, and might even cause the SDP to

⁴⁷ For example, at the parliamentary session on 2 July 2001, at which the LSCG voted for the DPS-SDP government, leading LSCG figure Slavko Perovic stated that the government's program was "in essence demagogical and that it throws fog into the eyes of the citizens" (*Vijesti*, 3 July 2001).

abandon its coalition with the DPS. However, DPS agreement to participate at federal level could open the way to a broad coalition in Montenegro, including the People's Party (NS) and possibly the SNP. Some figures in the DPS are known to have favoured such a government after the 22 April 2001 election, arguing that this would solve the political crises in the federation and in Montenegro at a stroke.

DPS leaders have so far ruled out any such participation at the federal level. Their commitment to independence remains firm. However, the possibility of a compromise, perhaps later this year, should not be ruled out. Much will depend on the behaviour of the LSCG. If fears as to the unreliability of its support are realised, the DPS may by the autumn be forced to look for other options in order to ensure a functioning government in Montenegro. This is highly plausible, especially as the difficulties in adhering to the LSCG's timetable for a new referendum law and an independence referendum are likely to cause continuous strain.

However, for Djukanovic and the DPS to consider participation at the federal level, both Belgrade and the international community would need to adjust their stances towards Montenegro. Firstly, DOS would have to change the federal constitution in order to reverse amendments pushed through by Milosevic in July 2000 which removed Montenegro's equal status in the federation and were the formal reason for the ruling Montenegrin parties' non-participation in the September 2000 federal elections. This should not prove a problem given that DOS also opposed the amendments at the time and the SNP, which supported them under duress from Milosevic, would probably be happy to see them reversed now.

Furthermore, this amendment would need to be presented as a temporary step to ensure a functioning government, full cooperation with the international community and progress in reforms for the mutual benefit of Montenegro and Serbia. Both DOS and the international community should accept that it is unrealistic to expect the DPS to abandon the independence aspiration. Because of the difficult domestic situation in Montenegro and the highly divisive nature of the independence issue at present, the DPS may come to accept that it is necessary to put such plans on hold. But the

party is absolutely unready to abandon the aspiration. It would insist that constructive participation go hand-in-hand with discussions with Belgrade to redefine the relationship between the two republics, with full independence as one possible outcome.

B. SERBIAN INDEPENDENCE?

There is increasing sentiment within Serbia itself to get rid of Yugoslavia.⁴⁸ Already anti-Montenegrin sentiment is growing. Prior to the Milosevic transfer, only 61 per cent of Serbs favoured remaining in the federal state. Given the negative publicity caused by the SNP's behaviour over the law on ICTY cooperation, this number has certainly diminished. Some opinion pollsters believe that should the Republic government mount a concerted media campaign for independence, it could rapidly win overwhelming support among a public that is weary of defending a federation whose value or purpose has become ever more debatable.⁴⁹

Some in the Republic government have already begun to discuss Serbian independence. During the fight in the federal government over passing the law on ICTY cooperation, Serbian Republic Justice Minister Batic stated that Serbia would not let itself be the hostage of "even a single political option in Montenegro". He added that "if the law is not adopted, it could lead to a difficult crisis that could ... influence the continuation of the FRY".⁵⁰ This built on earlier statements he had made calling for an independence referendum for Serbia.⁵¹

Djindjic refers increasingly to the weakness and deadlock of the federal government as a reason for Serbia to take an active and near sovereign role and ignore Yugoslav federal institutions. In this sense, he may already be exploring the path taken by Montenegro and Djukanovic two years ago. He

⁴⁸ "Srbiju spasava suverena Srbija", *Srpska rec*, 20 June 2001.

⁴⁹ "Manje gradjana Srbije za zajednicku drzavu", *Radio B92*, 25 June 2001.

⁵⁰ "Batic: nalazimo se pred raskrscom", *Radio B92*, 18 June 2001.

⁵¹ "Batic: vreme je za referendum u srbiji", *Radio B92*, 4 June 2001.

has said that the members of the federal Constitutional Court belong “behind bars” for criminal fraud, and they would be there in “every country with a regulated legal system”. For Djindjic “the collapse of Yugoslavia would not be a catastrophe”, as the DOS coalition at the federal level is simply “a piece of paper”.⁵² Because of this, Djindjic has argued that cooperation “in the remainder of Yugoslavia can be ignored”.⁵³

Until mid June 2001, such remarks would have been dismissed as rhetoric in the battle against the SNP. They now indicate an increasing tendency on the part of Serbia’s political elite to openly discuss distancing themselves from what they regard as failed political structures. The prospects for a Serbian effort to dissolve Yugoslavia depend in large part on developments between Djindjic and Kostunica. If the relationship with the federal government continues to deteriorate, Djindjic will be more likely to contemplate an accommodation with Djukanovic that could mean the end of the crippled federation. He has already stated that the “crisis on the federal level can only be resolved by reforming the constitution and by new [federal] elections.” Djindjic has announced that his Republican government will present a new proposal to regulate federal constitutional reform by autumn, and that DOS members on the Republic level are ready to accept all the Montenegrin proposals, except the demand for two seats at the UN.⁵⁴ Podgorica appears open to direct negotiations on this. Other DOS leaders, however, have indicated that the federal government will work on a proposal to reform the joint state – something that Podgorica rejects.

C. KOSOVO

It may be that, in the minds of Serbia’s government, Kosovo is already the only glue keeping the Yugoslav federation together. Djindjic says that, due to the inability of the international community, the FRY or Serbia to resolve the status of Kosovo, “the continuation of the existence of FRY is a better option”.⁵⁵ The implication is that

the only reason to maintain the Yugoslav federation is Kosovo’s undefined status.⁵⁶ Many in the international community and Serbia fear that if FRY dissolves, Kosovo will gain *de jure* independence. This fear stems not only from the current situation, in which Kosovo is run by a UN administration (UNMIK) and protected by a NATO-led security force (KFOR), but also from UN Security Council Resolution 1244, which refers to Kosovo as a part of FRY without any mention of Serbia. ICG’s view is that, as a matter of law, there is no basis for assuming that the dissolution of the FRY would itself have any implications for Kosovo’s independence,⁵⁷ but there is no doubt about the currency of this view in Belgrade.

Within Kosovo itself, the transfer has been largely ignored. This indifference reflects three factors. First, there is the perennial Kosovo Albanian stance that events in Serbia have nothing to do with them. Second, there is a universal conviction among Kosovo Albanians that they fought not only Milosevic but the Serbs, the overwhelming majority of whom want to keep Kosovo in subjection. And third, there is a widespread feeling that the ambitions of ethnic Albanians might have been better served if Milosevic had remained in power, or at least in a Belgrade prison.

Nevertheless, the transfer offers the potential not only for catharsis among Kosovo Albanians, but also for a way whereby Kosovo Serbs might begin to reconcile with their Albanian neighbours. Whether this benefit will be reaped or not, depends primarily on the federal and Serbian governments, which will need at the very least to encourage Kosovo Serbs to register and vote in the November 2001 Kosovo-wide elections, and desist from harmful demands such as the return of Yugoslav troops.

⁵² “Kostunica mora biti jak predsednik”, *Blic*, 3 July 2001.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ “Kostunica mora biti jak predsednik”, *Blic*, 3 July 2001.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ The currency of this view in the Serbian government has been confirmed members of the government in discussion with ICG.

⁵⁷ For a detailed discussion of the implications of FRY dissolution for Kosovo, see the ICG book-length report, *After Milosevic: A Practical Agenda For Lasting Balkans Peace*, International Crisis Group, Brussels, 2001, especially pp.36, 115-6.

D. THE FUTURE OF THE FRY

The FRY constitution itself has lacked legitimacy since the changes imposed by the Milosevic regime in 2000 went against the wishes of Montenegro and were adopted without a constitutional convention or other appropriate legal procedure.⁵⁸ Montenegro has been *de facto* independent for at least two years. The only significant federal government institutions currently functioning in Montenegro are the army and air traffic control. As the Milosevic transfer drama showed, the feeble power enjoyed by the FRY government continues to shrink.

With its government in disarray, and with both Serbia and Montenegro committed to following their own interests, the federal state must quickly redefine itself or risk losing not only all relevance, but also its continued existence. Should the federal institutions continue to be ineffective, or to be blocked by the minority SNP, Serbia may soon – in an effort to protect its own interests – declare independence from the FRY. By transferring Milosevic, Djindjic and his DOS colleagues in the Serbian Republic government showed their readiness to overrule federal decisions. Their confidence in this respect seems likely to grow. They have already hinted that a weak and undefined federal state may force them to seek new options, and they may be expected to follow those hints with deeds.

Already the presidency of DOS – which includes both Djindjic and Kostunica – has met and set urgent priorities for the federal government to overcome the current crisis at federal level. The new federal government is expected to concentrate on two issues only: constitutional reform and economic relations with foreign countries and with foreign donors.⁵⁹ While all concerned will take these tasks seriously, it appears that the collapse of the federal government has forced many “Yugo-nostalgic” individuals to face up to the seriousness of the current crisis. Since the Milosevic transfer, the SNP has mentioned the need for a new constitutional convention, possibly by the spring of

2002.⁶⁰ Djindjic, Kostunica and the remainder of DOS appear to want an earlier date, and are mentioning the beginning of August⁶¹ Whether this will be accepted by Montenegro’s ruling coalition is yet to be seen.

The international community has promoted policies that could be construed as having unwittingly contributed to the prolonged constitutional standoff and the weakening of the federal government and institutions. Rather as happened in the spring of 1991 – when the U.S. and EU unquestioningly supported Yugoslav unity – international backing for a unified federal Yugoslavia has tended to exacerbate the domestic situation, encouraging the SNP in particular to obstruct a meaningful renegotiation of constitutional structures. If anything, continued insistence by the international community on maintenance of the federation at all costs narrows the scope for fruitful cooperation between Belgrade and Podgorica. As a result, the federal agony continues, the federal government gets weaker and weaker, and increasingly Serbs as well as Montenegrins are led to question the continued utility of the common state.

Should the EU, the U.S., and the FRY prove unable to redefine their policies and roles, the dissolution of the third Yugoslavia⁶² is only a matter of time and method.

⁵⁸ *After Milosevic: A Practical Agenda For Lasting Balkans Peace*, International Crisis Group, Brussels, 2001, p.35.

⁵⁹ “Orociti mandat nove vlade”, *Danas*, 5 July 2001.

⁶⁰ “Na prolece izbori za novu ustavotvornu skupstinu”, *Blic*, 5 July 2001.

⁶¹ Djindjic: novi ustav SRJ pocetkom agusta”, *Danas*, 5 July 2001.

⁶² The first Yugoslavia was destroyed by Nazi Germany’s invasion in 1941. The second Yugoslavia ended 50 years later, with Slovenia’s and Croatia’s successful bids for independence. The third Yugoslavia is the FRY, declared in April 1992.

V. WHAT THE CRISIS MEANS FOR THE REGION

The Milosevic transfer has significant implications for at least two of FRY's neighbours – Croatia and Bosnia – as well as for the federation itself. Sadly, the neighbouring country that seems least likely to benefit from Milosevic's transfer is Macedonia. Macedonia was spared from inter-ethnic violence during the decade of Milosevic's power, and his definitive removal from the scene will do nothing to alleviate the potential for spiralling conflict there.

A. CROATIA

In Croatia, the transfer prompted two kinds of reaction. Some politicians and commentators emphasised that the transfer was a mercenary act, produced by international pressure and the carrot of the donors conference. They rolled out their familiar condemnations of Serb nationalism, in some cases warning that the "Greater Serbian" dream was not yet dead, and reiterating that other Serb indictees, directly linked to war crimes in Croatia, must face justice. Others, however, praised the Serbian government's courage, comparing it favourably with the Croatian government's hesitancy in the face of nationalist denunciations of cooperation with The Hague, and noting that ICTY pressure on Zagreb to improve its cooperation would probably now increase.⁶³ One veteran commentator hoped the transfer would "make it easier for the Croatian government to counter the nationalist manipulation of public opinion ... more decisively".⁶⁴

President Mesic, who showed personal courage by cooperating with The Hague in the mid 1990s, was among those who praised Belgrade's action as "brave" and "wise", a "crucial step towards facing the truth about the wars on the territory of the former Yugoslavia". He said: "This [degree of cooperation] is the only way for nations and ethnic

groups from this area to shake off the burden of collective responsibility, which has been used – long, often and successfully – by certain groups to hamper the process of normalisation among the countries of the former Yugoslavia." Mesic also expressed willingness to testify against Milosevic if requested.⁶⁵ Overall, the transfer will certainly assist those in Zagreb who favour full cooperation with the ICTY, and should weaken their opponents, especially in the armed forces and the war veterans' organisations, and in right-wing parties led by the late President Tudjman's Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ).

B. BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the reaction within the Bosniak (Muslim) community was muted. Rather as many Croats appear less interested in Milosevic than in the so-called "Vukovar three" – a trio of Yugoslav officers involved with crimes committed in eastern Croatia in 1991 – so the Bosniaks are passionately concerned that the Bosnian Serb political and military leaders, Radovan Karadzic and General Ratko Mladic, be taken to The Hague. If Milosevic were to be sentenced by ICTY only for Kosovo-related charges, there would be a widespread sense among the Bosniaks that his trial would have been a travesty. At the same time, Milosevic's removal from Serbia may open the way for increased pressure on the Bosniaks and the Tribunal to deal with the issue of Muslim war crimes.

For Bosnia's Serbs, the transfer increases international pressure to cooperate with the Tribunal and begin arresting the 26 indictees currently residing in the Serb-controlled entity, Republika Srpska. This pressure is evident already in the preparation of a long overdue law on cooperation with ICTY that Republika Srpska's minister of justice promises will be adopted shortly. Visiting The Hague on 4 July, Republika Srpska premier Mladen Ivanic signalled an unprecedented readiness to cooperate with ICTY. On the other hand, the internal obstacles to this are immense. The presence of large numbers of persons potentially indictable for war crimes

⁶³ The Croatian weekly *Nacional* (3 July 2001) claimed on 3 July 2001 that the Tribunal would soon demand the transfer of three Croatian generals in connection with crimes committed in 1993 and 1995.

⁶⁴ Damir Grubisa in *Novi list*, 30 July 2001.

⁶⁵ "Mesic ce svdociti protiv Milosevica", *Radio B92*, 28 June 2001.

within the structures of the governing Serb Democratic Party (SDS) means that even with a law, apprehension of such figures as Karadzic and Mladic is unlikely without substantial international pressure – applied both directly and via Belgrade – and continued SFOR (NATO) involvement.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ See ICG Balkans Report No. 103, *War Criminals in Republika Srpska. Who Are the People in Your Neighbourhood?*, 2 November 2000.

APPENDIX

GLOSSARY OF POLITICAL PARTIES

Political Party	Political Alignment
Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DOS)	The loose governing coalition of eighteen political parties, from across Serbia's political spectrum. Principally democratically orientated, anti-Milosevic parties. DOS won a two-thirds majority in the 250 seat-Assembly with 65 per cent of the popular vote in the December 2000 Serbian elections. DOS includes Premier Djindjic's Democratic Party (DS) and President Kostunica's Democratic Party of Serbia (DSS).
Democratic Party of Socialists (DPS)	The DPS – a communist successor party - forms the core of the governing coalition in Montenegro, and has moved to a pro-independence position. Its leader is President Djukanovic.
Democratic Party of Serbia (DSS)	Led by FRY President Vojislav Kostunica, formerly a gathering point for ultra-nationalist intellectuals, the DSS is currently the most popular party in Serbia thanks to Kostunica's personal prestige.
Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ)	Right-wing, nationalist party founded by late President Franjo Tudjman, and now led by Ivo Sanader, following Tudjman's death in December 2001. Since 2000 the party's support has declined considerably. A sister-party to the HDZ in Bosnia.
Liberal Alliance for Montenegro (LSCG)	The most consistently, radically pro-independence party, led by Miodrag Zivkovic.
Social Democratic Party (SDP)	A pro-independence, pro-Western Montenegrin party, led by Zarko Rakcevic.
Serb Democratic Party (SDS)	Hard-line Bosnian nationalist party.
Socialist People's Party (SNP)	Pro-Yugoslav Montenegrin party opposed to independence. The SNP split from the DPS in 1999. Predrag Bulatovic has headed the SNP since February 2001.
Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS)	Slobodan Milosevic's unreformed former communist party. The largest opposition party, it holds – in coalition with the United Yugoslav Left (JUL) – 37 out of the 250 seats in the Serbian Assembly, and 44 out of 138 seats in the federal lower house.
Serbian Radical Party (SRS)	Led by Vojislav Seselj, the SRS was the strongest ultra-nationalist party for most of the 1990s in Serbia. After its poor showing in the December elections, its future is unclear.

International Crisis Group

149 Avenue Louise, 1050 Brussels, Belgium • Tel: +32 2 502 90 38 • Fax: +32 2 502 50 38

E-mail: icgbrussels@crisisweb.org

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