

Dealing with 'Rogue' States: A Case Study of Serbia

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I hereby certify that this material which I now submit for assessment on the programme of study leading to the award of PhD is entirely my own work and has not been taken from the work of others save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.

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Abstract

This thesis examines the impact of international coercive policies on democratic opposition parties operating within 'rogue' states. Using Serbia between 1992 and 2000 as a case study, the aim of this research is to evaluate the impact of the international community's coercion of Serbia on the effectiveness of the Serbian democratic opposition in their campaigns against the Milošević regime. In order to explore this issue, the time period from 1992 to 2000 is broken down into five sub-periods in each of which Serbia's experience of international coercion differed in terms of its nature and/or extent. Within each of these sub-periods the issues of whether Serbia's opposition parties held positions that differed from those of the Milošević regime on issues that were of key international concern; the extent and nature of links between the Serbian democratic opposition and the international community; and the impact of international policy on the effectiveness of the democratic opposition in opposing the Milošević regime is investigated. The findings of this research show that the positions of the democratic opposition parties were often closer to those of the international community than were those of the Milošević regime, and that for much of the time international coercion of Serbia undermined Serbia's opposition in its efforts to oppose Milošević.

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Abbreviations

CESID	Centre for Free Elections and Democracy (Centar za Slobodne Izbore i Demokratiju)
CSCE	Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe
DEPOS	Democratic Movement of Serbia (Demokratski Pokret Srbije)
DOS	Democratic Opposition of Serbia (Demokratska Opozicija Srbije)
DS	Democratic Party (Demokratska Stranka)
DSS	Democratic Party of Serbia (Demokratska Stranka Srbije)
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EC	European Community
EU	European Union
IC	International Community
GSS	Civic Alliance of Serbia (Gradjanski Savez Srbije)
ICFY	International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia
ICG	International Crisis Group
ICTY	International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JNA	Yugoslav People's Army (Jugoslovenska Narodna Armija)
JUL	Yugoslav United Left (Jugoslovenska Udružena Levica)
KLA	Kosovo Liberation Army
KVM	Kosovo Verification Mission
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
ND	New Democracy (Nova Demokratija)
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
RS	Republika Srpska
SFRJ	Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Socijalistička Federativna Republika Jugoslavije)
SIK	Federal Electoral Commission (Savezna Izborna Komisija)
SLS	Serbian Liberal Party (Srpska Liberalna Stranka)
SPO	Serbian Renewal Movement (Srpski Pokret Obnove)
SPS	Socialist Party of Serbia (Socijalistička Partije Srbije)
SRS	Serbian Radical Party (Srpska Radikalna Stranka)

SRJ	Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Savezna Republika Jugoslavije)
SSJ	Serbian Unity Party (Stranka Srpkog Jedinstva)
SZP	Alliance for Change (Savez za Promene)
UN	United Nations
VOPP	Vance Owen Peace Plan
WEU	Western European Union

Introduction

The central focus of this research is to consider the impact of international coercion of 'rogue states' on the democratic opposition parties operating in those states, using Serbia between 1992 and 2000 as a case study. The aim of this research is to examine the extent to which international policy impacted on the effectiveness of Serbia's democratic opposition parties in their campaigns against the Milošević regime throughout this time period. This will be done through a series of case studies in each of which international policy with respect to Serbia differed. Each of these case studies will address three central themes: the differences between the positions of the democratic opposition parties and those of the Milošević regime on the issues that were of central importance to the international community (IC); the nature and extent of the relationship between the democratic opposition parties and the IC; and the impact of the international policy on the effectiveness of the democratic opposition parties in their campaigns against the Milošević regime.

In spite of the increasing use of international coercion – either through sanctions or the use of military force – in the post-Cold War era, there has been little attention paid to the impact of such policies on democratic forces operating within the target states. Given that this is a significant issue in contemporary international politics, with international policy aimed at regime change becoming more prevalent, the first chapter of this thesis will outline the importance of gaining a greater understanding of the impact of coercive policies on domestic opponents of targeted regimes. In addition, it will also consider the tasks of democratic opposition parties operating in competitive authoritarian regimes such as Milošević's. The methodology that has been used in carrying out this study is Alexander George's methodology of

structured, focused comparison and the advantages of taking this approach will be discussed in chapter two.

Milošević's Serbia is particularly useful as a case study in which to address the issues raised in this thesis for two main reasons. Firstly, throughout the time period in which Serbia was subjected to international coercion, there were democratic opposition parties operating within Serbia which regularly challenged the regime, either through elections or mass demonstrations. Secondly, as will be outlined in chapter two, Serbia was subject to a variety of coercive policies including comprehensive UN sanctions, sanctions targeted at the Milošević regime directly, and even military action, and so allows for a comparison of the impact of a range of coercive strategies employed by the IC.

Chapters three to eight are the five case studies that constitute the core of this research and each covers a particular time period in which Serbia's experience of international coercion differed. In each of these case studies three main themes will be addressed. Firstly, the extent to which the democratic opposition parties can be considered to have been a credible alternative partner for the IC will be assessed by comparing their positions on the issues that were of central importance to the IC to those of the Milošević regime. Secondly, the nature of the relationship between the IC and the democratic opposition parties will be outlined. And finally, the impact of international policy on the effectiveness of the democratic opposition parties' campaigns against the Milošević regime will be examined. The aim will be to evaluate whether international coercive policies acted to undermine or enhance the effectiveness of Serbia's democratic opposition parties in their campaigns against the Milošević regime.

Chapter 1: International Coercion and its Impact on Democratic Opposition Parties in ‘Rogue’ States

While international coercion is not a new phenomenon in international relations, its use as a tool in an effort to compel target states to change behaviour considered objectionable by other states and international actors has increased in the post-Cold War period. The imposition of mandatory UN sanctions increased dramatically during the 1990s, while in the post-9/11 period military force has been used against Afghanistan and Iraq. Furthermore, both Iran and North Korea have been threatened with similar coercive measures in an effort to force them to comply with the demands of other states and international actors. As a result, analysts have devoted considerable attention to such issues, and in particular to the use, effectiveness and consequences of international sanctions. However, given the centrality of states and governments in much international relations theory, it is unsurprising that the focus of the majority of this work has been on the states and governments of the target and coercer countries, with scant attention being paid to the impact of such policies on domestic opposition parties within the target states. These actors are not insignificant however, as usually it is these parties who will form the government of the coerced state once the ‘rogue’ regime has been removed. Recent difficulty surrounding the formation of a government in post-Saddam Iraq highlights the importance of such actors and the need for both policymakers and analysts to reach a better understanding of domestic opposition forces within the states that are subject to international coercion. Experience in both Iraq and Afghanistan clearly demonstrates that ‘regime change’ is a considerably more complex process than merely removing and replacing an objectionable leader or government, and it is a process that will involve domestic

political actors, many of whom will have attempted to operate within the target state while it was subject to international coercion. It is these actors that are the central focus of this study.

This research examines the impact of international coercive action on the internal politics of the target state, using Serbia during the Milošević era as a case study. The starting point of this study is May 1992 when Serbia was first subjected to UN sanctions, while the end point is the victory of Serbia's democratic opposition parties in the September 2000 elections and the eventual overthrow of Milošević following a mass uprising in October 2000; following this Serbia's international isolation was gradually reduced. While Serbia differs in significant ways from Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan and North Korea, as do each of these states from each other, it nevertheless provides an useful case study when considering the issue of the impact of international coercion on internal opposition forces.

Two characteristics of Serbia's experience of international coercion make it a particularly suitable case study for considering the impact of coercive policies on domestic opposition forces. Firstly, throughout the time period in which Serbia was subject to international coercion, domestic opposition parties operated within Serbia and regularly challenged the Milošević regime in federal, republican and local elections, as well as through organising mass protests and demonstrations. This provides the opportunity to examine the influence of international action on the effectiveness of those who were challenging Milošević. In addition, although most opposition attempts to unseat Milošević failed, this changed in 2000 when democratic opposition parties successfully challenged the regime in federal elections and subsequently defended that victory against Milošević's attempts to have it overturned. This allows for an examination of the role of international actors in these events and

provides the opportunity to consider whether changes in the IC's approach to Serbia at the end of the 1990s contributed to the opposition's success.

A further feature of Serbia's experience during the 1990s that makes it particularly suitable as a case study within the context of this research is the variety of coercive policies that the IC used when dealing with Serbia. These included mandatory UN sanctions in the first half of the 1990s, targeted sanctions in the latter half of the 1990s and even military force in 1999, in addition to a period following the Dayton agreement during which the coercion and isolation of Serbia were relatively low. This range of international attempts to coerce the Milošević government makes it possible to compare the impact of these different coercive policies on the democratic opposition parties that were operating in Serbia during this time.

The extent to which the IC's coercive policies with respect to Serbia impacted on the democratic opposition parties is heavily dependent on the context in which these events took place. The decisions made by individual actors within the Serbian democratic opposition will have resulted from a complex combination of factors, of which international policy will only have been one. For this reason, it is important to look in some detail at the context in which these decisions were made in order to consider which aspects of the democratic opposition's actions were influenced by international policy. For this reason a case study research strategy will be used in carrying out this study. As Yin states, a case study is 'an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident' (Yin, 2003: 13). Only through adopting a case study research strategy will it be possible to thoroughly examine this context and address the questions posed by this study. Alternative approaches, such as an experimental research strategy or a statistical or

survey based research strategy, would simply not be suitable for addressing these issues. Yin states that a case study research strategy has a distinct advantage over other research strategies in situations when ‘a “how” or “why” question is being asked about a contemporary set of events over which the investigator has little or no control’ (Yin, 2003: 9). This is certainly the case with respect to the central focus of this research. Furthermore, ‘the case study method allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events’ (Yin, 2003:2). In addition to these considerations regarding the general suitability of a case study approach, the specific methodology chosen for this study, Alexander George’s method of structured, focused comparison, is particularly well suited given the aims of the methodology. George developed this methodology in order to be able to aggregate the findings of case studies into a form of policy-relevant theory about the uses and limitations of strategies such as deterrence, crisis management and coercive diplomacy (George, 1991: xiii). As such, this is broadly in line with the aims and subject matter of this thesis. Furthermore, in terms of the advantages of this approach, George notes, ‘intensive analysis of a few cases may be more rewarding than a more superficial statistical analysis of many cases’ (George, 1979: 50). This methodology will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 2.

In considering the impact of international actions on Serbia’s internal politics during this time, the primary focus will be on the political parties of the democratic opposition that challenged Milošević for power. However, these were not the only actors that opposed the Milošević regime at this time. Throughout the 1990s Milošević was challenged by both political parties and non-party opposition groups, for example the mass movement Otpor in the late 1990s; armed groups such as the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) in Kosovo; and from 1997 the elected government of

Montenegro, Serbia's only partner in the Yugoslav federation. While all of these groups played significant roles in opposing and weakening Milošević and his regime, the decision to focus on the democratic opposition parties has been made for two reasons.

Firstly, in spite of the potential importance of domestic opposition forces in states that are subject to international coercion, there has been little attention paid to the impact of coercion and isolation on democratic opposition parties in those states. The aim of this thesis is to make the democratic opposition parties the central focus of inquiry and to consider the relationship between these parties and the IC throughout the entire time period in which Serbia was, to a greater or lesser degree, internationally isolated and subject to coercion. The central question that will be considered is whether or not international isolation and other coercive measures served to undermine or enhance the democratic opposition parties' ability to operate effectively against the Milošević regime.

The second reason for selecting the democratic opposition parties as the central focus of this research, relates to the fact that this study will be considering the impact of international policy as formulated by states and international institutions. Understandably and inevitably, international policy with respect to Milošević's Serbia will have been directed towards attempting to ensure that the policies and actions that the IC considered objectionable would be halted or reversed. Until the late 1990s, the primary means by which the IC attempted to achieve its objectives in Serbia was through the coercion of the Serbian authorities in an effort to make compliance with international demands a more attractive option than continued defiance. At issue here is whether and how this approach to Serbia on the part of the IC impacted on the effectiveness of the democratic opposition parties in their campaigns against the

regime. Given that such an approach may have effectively ruled out an alternative means by which the IC could have achieved its objectives in Serbia - that is through a change of government that would have pursued alternative policies rather than through coercion of the authorities then in power - this is a question that deserves consideration. Furthermore, in the Serbian context, had the IC chosen such a strategy, it would have been the political opposition to Milošević that would have formed an alternative to the Milošević regime, and thus it would have been these parties that the IC would have been dealing with in order to achieve its goals. However, this is not to imply that had the IC pursued a different strategy in Serbia that involved bolstering the democratic opposition that this would have resulted in the overthrow of the regime and the achievement of IC goals; at best, such conclusions can be nothing other than speculative. Nevertheless, it is possible to analyse the impact of IC policy on the democratic opposition parties and to draw conclusions regarding the extent to which IC policy may have either undermined or enhanced the effectiveness of the democratic opposition.

Given the aims of this research, an important consideration is whether or not an internationally acceptable alternative to the Milošević regime existed in Serbia during the time period being considered in this research. As such a major concern is to examine the extent to which the democratic opposition parties in Serbia held positions that were different to those of the Milošević regime on the issues that were of key importance to the IC, and answering this question will be the first task of this study.

Once it has been established whether or not the democratic opposition parties did hold positions that were closer to those of the IC than were the positions of the Milošević regime, and as such represented, at least in principle, an alternative partner for the IC, there will then be an examination of the impact of international coercive

policies on the democratic opposition parties and their activities. This will be done through a series of five case studies, in each of which Serbia's experience of international isolation and coercion was different, and this will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 2. However, before proceeding to analyse the impact of international policy on the democratic opposition in Serbia it is necessary to consider the use of coercive policies in general, their impacts and effectiveness and whether existing theories might give any indication of what the likely effect of coercion on democratic opposition parties might be.

International Coercion and 'Rogue' States

The increasing use of coercion and international isolation to bring about policy changes in 'rogue' states has led to debate regarding the effectiveness of such policies. At present there is little agreement among analysts as to whether, or under what conditions, coercive policies can be considered to be effective or to have succeeded in bringing about the changes desired by the coercer states and institutions. Indeed, there is even disagreement regarding how 'success' should be defined. Largely absent from this debate, however, is detailed analysis of the impact of coercive policies on democratic opposition forces operating within such states. This is in spite of the potential significance of such actors, as will be discussed in greater detail below. A fuller understanding of the impact of coercion on democratic opposition forces within the target state and of the relationship between the IC and domestic opposition parties should be considered when deciding whether coercive policies represent the most appropriate course of action in particular situations. This section will begin with a brief discussion of how 'rogue states' are to be defined in

this study and the primary means by which the IC most commonly tries to coerce such states into changing their behaviour. This will be followed by a consideration of the main themes in the debate surrounding the use, effectiveness and consequences of coercive policies, and the potential importance of considering the impact such policies have on opposition forces within the target state.

The term 'rogue state' has become part of the lexicon of post-Cold War international relations, used regularly by policymakers, journalists and academics. In the contemporary context, usage of the term, and of synonyms such as 'pariah state', 'outlaw state' or 'outcast state', conjure up images of terrorist-sponsoring states of the middle-East that are pursuing the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) as part of their struggle against 'Western' (or more precisely American) values. According to this stereotype, Serbia in the 1990s would not qualify as a 'rogue state'. However, this usage reflects the contemporary concerns of US foreign policymakers and ignores the fact that rogue states have existed throughout history and have been seen as such for a variety of reasons related to both their internal and external behaviour. In the context of this research, and drawing on the work of Deon Geldenhuys, 'rogue states' will be defined as those states that are subjected to a policy of enforced international isolation (Geldenhuys, 1990).

Attempts to define rogue states in terms of the behaviour that they engage in have proven to be unsuccessful, as is acknowledged by many authors who have written on the subject (Chomsky, 2000; Hoyt, 2000, Klare, 1995; Littwak, 2000; Tanter, 1999). The lack of objectivity inherent in the labelling of particular states as rogues makes defining the term with reference to the behaviour of the designated states problematic, and therefore a different approach is needed. In this regard, Deon Geldenhuys' work on isolated states is particularly useful (Geldenhuys, 1990). For

Geldenhuis, 'pariah states' or 'ostracised states' are merely a category of isolated state (Geldenhuis, 1990: 2). While acknowledging the possibility that states can be voluntarily isolated or isolated as a result of their international insignificance, Geldenhuis' 1990 study is a comparative analysis of several states that were internationally isolated as a result of deliberate action on the part of outside states. Geldenhuis defines enforced isolation as 'a deliberate policy pursued by two or more states against another, over a period of time, aimed at severing or curtailing the latter's international interactions against its will' (Geldenhuis, 1990: 6). This type of policy is 'designed to compel the target state to adjust or abandon values that are offensive to outside powers' (Geldenhuis, 1990: 7). Defining the ostracised state as one that is subjected to a policy of enforced isolation by outside powers captures the reality of contemporary international relations and avoids trying to formulate an objective definition for what is in essence a highly subjective concept. When Geldenhuis' framework for measuring international isolation is applied to Serbia during the Milošević era it makes it possible to break down the time period under consideration in this study into five sub-periods, in each of which Serbia's experience of international isolation was different, and each of these sub-periods represents a distinct case study within this research. Geldenhuis' framework and its usefulness in relation to Serbia will be discussed fully in chapter 2.

Sanctions

The primary means by which the IC attempts to coerce a state that has been designated as a pariah or outcast are the imposition of sanctions and the use of military force, with sanctions often seen as an alternative to the use of force (Pape,

1997: 90). The imposition of sanctions is not a recent phenomenon in international relations, but their use has grown since World War I (Pape, 1997: 90; Rose, 2005: 459). The post-Cold War era saw a significant increase in the use of multilateral sanctions. Until 1990 the UN Security Council had imposed mandatory sanctions only twice, against Rhodesia in 1966 and South Africa in 1977. However, the ending of the superpower conflict facilitated agreement between the Security Council's permanent members, and UN sanctions were imposed on 12 occasions during the 1990s, leading Cortright and Lopez to refer to the 1990s as 'The Sanctions Decade' (Cortright and Lopez, 2000). Outside of the UN, other international organisations and individual states also impose sanctions, with the US and the EU imposing most of the non-UN sanctions that were put in place during the 1990s (Cortright and Lopez, 2000: 13). The US has made regular use of sanctions as part of its foreign policy with Kaempfer and Lowenberg noting that in 2001 'the US had unilateral economic sanctions either in place or pending against 74 countries' (Kaempfer and Lowenberg, 2004: 31). Indeed the use of sanctions has been so prevalent in recent times that by 1998 almost half of the world's population lived in countries that were subject to sanctions (Rose, 2005: 459).

In spite of the widespread use of sanctions, many analysts argue that such measures are not an effective means of achieving the objectives of those imposing sanctions, a situation Baldwin has referred to as the 'basic paradox at the heart of the sanctions debate' (Baldwin, 1999: 80). Furthermore, research indicates that sanctions have become less effective over time with less than a quarter being judged to have achieved their objectives in the 1970s and 1980s (Elliott, 1998: 50). In addition, the humanitarian suffering that has been caused by comprehensive trade sanctions has led some analysts to dispute their non-violent character (Van Brabant, 1999: 15), while

the perception that sanctions might provide a cheap alternative to the use of force is also questioned (Van Brabant, 1999: 7; Galtung, 1967: 412). It is not the purpose of this study to examine the utility or effectiveness of sanctions and other coercive policies. However, given the extensive use of such measures, it is important that their impact and consequences are fully understood, and to date there has been a lack of attention paid to the impact that such policies have on democratic opposition parties in target states. As will be discussed below, domestic opposition forces in any state subject to coercion are potentially highly significant actors; indeed some argue that they are the key actors in states subject to sanctions (Kaempfer and Lowenberg, 1999). As such, consideration of how sanctions and other coercive policies impact on domestic opposition actors may also be useful in terms of identifying circumstances in which sanctions are more likely to be effective, and circumstances in which they may be inappropriate.

There is no single definition of sanctions, but most definitions share a number of common characteristics: sanctions are generally considered to be coercive, to be aimed at effecting change in the behaviour of the target state, and are imposed in pursuit of political rather than economic goals. Pape differentiates economic sanctions from other forms of international economic pressure such as trade wars or economic warfare, arguing that 'sanctions seek to lower the aggregate economic welfare of a target state by reducing international trade in order to coerce the target government to change its political behaviour' (Pape, 1997: 93-94). Drury offers a similar definition claiming that economic sanctions are 'foreign policy tools used by the sender country to pressure the target country to conform to the sender's demands' (Drury, 2001: 488). While Chan and Drury include the 'threatened withdrawal of economic resources' in their definition of sanctions, they agree that the purpose of such a

strategy is to bring about a change of policy in the target state (Chan and Drury, 2000: 1-2).

These definitions focus on economic sanctions, but it is also possible for states to be isolated in other areas as well, including the political, diplomatic, military and cultural spheres (Doxey, 1996: 11; Haass, 1998: 1). Geldenhuys, who describes sanctions as 'the cutting edge of isolation' (Geldenhuys, 1990: 20), claims that a state can be subject to international isolation in four areas: political and diplomatic, economic, military and socio-cultural, and he provides a detailed list of indicators of international isolation by which the extent of a state's isolation can be measured (Geldenhuys, 1990).

While it is generally agreed that the imposition of sanctions is a coercive measure designed to effect political change in the target state, some authors note that sanctions may have other goals, often unspecified, and that in evaluating sanctions these unstated goals should be considered in addition to the instrumental goals of behaviour modification. For example, Kaempfer and Lowenberg suggest that the true goal of sanctions may be 'to serve the interests of pressure groups within the sanctioning country' (Kaempfer and Lowenberg, 1988: 786), while Cortright and Lopez point out that sanctions can be imposed for symbolic purposes in addition to the stated objectives of the senders. These factors, they argue, need to be 'considered in evaluating the political effectiveness of sanctions' (Cortright and Lopez, 1990: 16). In a similar vein, Dashti-Gibson et al state that they:

suspect that sanctions are not always specifically designed to succeed, or at least not to succeed in their ostensible (i.e., publicly stated) goals. If, instead, the actual goals are purely symbolic or expressive, they can hardly fail to succeed in their true goal of showing disapproval, but are nonetheless judged as unsuccessful because they did not produce the

change in behaviour that was the official, rhetorical goal (Dashti-Gibson et al, 1997: 616).

Baldwin also argues that evaluating the success of a sanctions policy should entail more than simply considering whether or not the stated goals of the senders were achieved. He argues that the success of a sanctions policy ought to be evaluated with reference to the costs to both the user and the target and the stakes for both the user and the target, in addition to the effectiveness of the policy in achieving goals (Baldwin, 1998: 90).

Other analysts however, consider that whether or not the stated goals of those imposing sanctions were achieved is central to the evaluation of the effectiveness of a sanctions policy (Pape, 1997: 97; Morgan and Schwebach, 1997: 29), while Van Brabant argues that sanctions can only be considered successful 'in their expressive function, if one ignores the suffering of civilians not associated with the target regime that they may cause' (Van Brabant, 1999: 34). While sanctions may serve purposes beyond that of changing the behaviour of the target, it is nevertheless the case that the imposition of sanctions is usually accompanied by demands for behaviour modification on the part of the senders and it is reasonable to assume that an optimal outcome would be that the target state complies with these demands. As such, within the context of this study, when considering the motivations of those imposing sanctions it will be their stated demands for behaviour change on the part of the target state, in this case Milošević's Serbia, that will be considered. Given that the emphasis here is on the impact of sanctions and other coercive policies on the internal politics of the target state the issue of whether sanctions may be fulfilling functions beyond the target state is not of central concern. As such, within the context of this study,

sanctions will be defined as coercive measures intended to induce the target regime to change its behaviour in line with the stated demands of those imposing the sanctions.

The Political Impact of Sanctions

In imposing sanctions, the sender state(s) hope that the costs imposed on the target state will be sufficiently high that the target government will decide to change its behaviour rather than continue to incur these costs. Thus, one potential measure of the success of a sanctions regime is the extent to which it is successful in isolating the target state and the extent of damage that it can inflict on the target's economy. However, experience has shown that success in isolating a target state and inflicting severe economic damage does not necessarily lead to the achievement of political objectives (Cortright and Lopez, 2000: 3). Indeed, the notion that the level of political change induced by sanctions is proportionate to the level of damage that can be inflicted upon the target economy has been described as the 'naïve theory' of sanctions (Galtung, 1967: 388). That the successful isolation of a target state cannot be assumed to lead to compliance with international demands raises questions regarding how sanctions operate. What is clear however, is that if sanctions aim to alter the behaviour of ruling elites in the target state, the desired changes, should they occur, will take place within the domestic political arena of the sanctioned state. In other words, the intention of sanctions is to alter the internal political dynamics within the target state in such a way that the target state concedes to the demands of the sanctioners. This point is made by Cortright and Lopez who state that the 'political impact of sanctions ultimately depends on internal political dynamics within the targeted country' (Cortright and Lopez, 2000: 22). For this reason, a proper

understanding of the impact of such policies on the internal politics of the target state, both in terms of how they affect the ruling elite and how they affect domestic opposition forces, is a crucial factor to be considered when contemplating the effectiveness and suitability of sanctions to bring about such change.

As Pape notes, sanctions can coerce a target state in two ways, either directly through 'persuading the target governments that the issues at stake are not worth the price, or indirectly, by inducing popular pressure to force the government to concede, or by inducing a popular revolt that overthrows the government, resulting in the establishment of a government that will make concessions' (Pape, 1997: 94). Implicit in Pape's analysis is the importance of domestic opposition forces in either scenario. In the case of a direct impact, it is hoped that sanctions will be seen as too costly by the ruling regime, which will thus alter its behaviour to comply with international demands, in which case sanctions could be judged to have been effective. In such a case the targeted government's calculations are likely to include some consideration of the strength of opposition to the ruling regime. This point is clearly stated by Cortright and Lopez:

Sanctions succeed when targeted decision makers change their calculation of costs and benefits and determine that the advantages of cooperation with Security Council resolutions outweigh the costs of continued defiance of expressed global norms. One of the key considerations in a leadership's calculation of costs is the degree of opposition from domestic political constituencies. To the extent that sanctions strengthen or encourage these opposition constituencies, they are more likely to achieve success (Cortright and Lopez, 2000: 22).

In the alternative indirect scenario, it is hoped that sanctions will lead to the government bending to internal pressure or being overthrown by a dissatisfied population that blames the government for the predicament in which it finds itself. If the government is overthrown, it is hoped that a government that is more amenable to international demands will replace the target regime. As such, domestic opposition forces are also likely to be key players in such a scenario and domestic opposition parties could play a role in channelling popular dissatisfaction, attempting to depose the ruling regime and, on taking power, behaving in a way which satisfies the demands of those who imposed sanctions.

In spite of the potential centrality of such domestic opposition forces, much analysis concerning the political impact of sanctions focuses attention primarily on the target government, with consideration given to the fact that the political impact of sanctions may be to strengthen rather than weaken that government (Galtung, 1967: 409; Haass, 1998: 203; Doxey, 1996: 104; Kaempfer and Lowenberg, 2004: 29; Cortright and Lopez, 2000: 20). There are a number of ways in which it is perceived that sanctions may benefit the ruling elite in the target state, including the creation of a 'rally around the flag' effect which results in domestic groups supporting the government in the face of an external threat (Drezner, 2000: 214), and the creation of economic advantages for the ruling elite and its supporters who can make significant gains from smuggling and black market activities (Cortright and Lopez, 2000: 20). This can lead to the criminalisation of the target society, an effect that can endure long after the sanctions have been lifted (Andreas, 2005: 335). Further benefits that might accrue to the target government following the imposition of sanctions include providing the opportunity for the ruling elite to use sanctions as a scapegoat for its own failures; and enabling governments to become even more repressive, as occurred

in Haiti (Van Brabant, 1999: 34). As Galtung notes, these effects could be highly detrimental not only for the target state but also for those who impose the sanctions because 'the sending nation(s) not only may fail to achieve their goals, but may even contribute to exactly the opposite of what they hoped for' (Galtung, 1967: 409). In a similar vein, Van Brabant directly addresses the possibility of a negative impact on domestic opposition forces, stating that 'trade embargoes ... can undermine domestic opposition to the target regime and the longer-term foundation for a more democratic culture' (Van Brabant, 1999: 5).

Although not entirely ignored, relatively little consideration is given to the impact of sanctions on democratic opposition parties operating in the target state. This is noted by Cortright and Lopez who point out that 'Systematically underrepresented in many analyses of sanctions impact has been the extent to which sanctions affect the political capabilities and power of domestic opposition groups within the targeted nation' (Cortright and Lopez, 2000: 20). Although they are not entirely unnoticed in some of the literature, there appears to be an assumption that if sanctions can act to weaken the target government - and as noted above this is not always the case - that there may be indirect benefits for domestic opposition groups. Elliott suggests that sanctions can contribute to increasing domestic opposition to the ruling regime and can also serve as a signal 'either that support for opposition forces is explicit or that support for the ruling regime has been withdrawn' (Elliott, 1998: 55). However, there is no attempt to consider the impact that such a signal might have on domestic opposition parties, although it appears that there is an assumption that this impact would be positive. While it may seem logical to conclude that undermining the regime and strengthening the opposition are two sides of the same coin, this contention has not been tested, and, in the case of Serbia, there is evidence that this may not always

be the case. As Gordy notes, the decline in support for the Milošević regime throughout the 1990s was not always 'met by a corresponding growth on the part of the opposition' (Gordy, 2000: 79). While it is possible that the Serbian opposition's inability to capitalize on the Milošević regime's losses may be entirely due to its own weakness and deficiencies, with international policy being of little or no relevance, it is also possible that IC actions impacted on the democratic opposition parties in such a way as to undermine its ability to effectively oppose the Milošević regime.

Kaempfer and Lowenberg suggest a reason for the lack of attention paid to internal opposition parties, seeing it as the result of a deficiency of much of the literature on sanctions, both within the fields of economics and international relations, which, they argue, has tended to view states as single, rational actors. Kaempfer and Lowenberg eschew this position and choose instead to undertake 'an analysis of domestic political processes in both sanctioning and target nations' (Kaempfer and Lowenberg, 1999: 38). While the domestic political processes that lead states to impose sanctions against other states are not relevant in the context of this study, the centrality of the internal politics of the target state in Kaempfer and Lowenberg's work emphasises the importance of domestic opposition forces in the target state.

The theoretical work carried out by Kaempfer and Lowenberg (1988; 1999) and Kaempfer, Lowenberg and Mertens (2004) raises a number of questions concerning the presumed mechanisms through which sanctions operate, and the potential importance of domestic opposition groups within the target state. In essence, Kaempfer and Lowenberg argue in favour of targeted sanctions, claiming that such sanctions, which inflict only minimal economic damage, may be more effective than an untargeted sanctions regime that causes severe damage to the target economy (Kaempfer and Lowenberg, 1988: 786). Rejecting the 'naïve theory of sanctions'

discussed above, Kaempfer and Lowenberg argue that sanctions work ‘through their impact on the relative political effectiveness of interest groups within the target country’ and for this reason, for sanctions to be effective they ‘must be applied in such a way as to increase the political resources of those groups in the target country whose point of view is favoured by the sanctioners while diminishing the resources of the groups whose position is to be thwarted’ (Kaempfer and Lowenberg, 2004: 30). They argue that the impact that sanctions have on domestic opposition groups may be decisive in terms of achieving the stated goals of behaviour modification within the target state, and the significance of domestic opposition forces in this regard is seen as paramount. According to Kaempfer and Lowenberg, sanctions:

can only have a favourable impact on policymaking in the target state if there exists within that country a reasonably well-organised opposition group whose political effectiveness could be enhanced as a consequence of sanctions. In the absence of such a group, the sanctions might only strengthen the regime’s pursuit of its objectionable policy by helping to rally public opinion around the government (Kaempfer and Lowenberg, 1998: 51).

While recognising the potential for sanctions to have a negative impact on opposition forces, they claim that if targeted appropriately sanctions can enhance the effectiveness of democratic opposition groups, stating that ‘sanctions often work by helping such opposition movements gain support among the populace and giving enhanced legitimacy to their struggles’ (Kaempfer and Lowenberg, 1999: 51). However, while Kaempfer and Lowenberg argue that domestic opposition groups are a crucial factor to consider when contemplating sanctions, their work is entirely theoretical and is not tested in relation to specific cases.

Kaempfer and Lowenberg are not alone in considering that targeted sanctions may represent a more effective and less detrimental alternative to the type of wide-ranging, comprehensive sanctions that were put in place against states such as Iraq and Yugoslavia in the 1990s. Experience of sanctions during the 1990s, and of their detrimental humanitarian consequences, in particular in Iraq, led to efforts to develop 'smart' sanctions that 'are understood to be better targeted and/or more humane sanctions' (Van Brabant, 1998: 2). At the policy level, a series of initiatives was undertaken to investigate the possibility of employing sanctions that are targeted directly at particular groups and governments deemed objectionable by the senders of sanctions. The first of these initiatives, known as the Interlaken Process¹, investigated the possibility of using targeted financial sanctions, while the Bonn-Berlin Process dealt with arms embargoes, and travel and aviation related sanctions.² A third initiative, the Stockholm Process dealt with the implementation of targeted sanctions.³

In addition, a number of analysts have also considered the relative utility of targeted sanctions, with some arguing that they are more likely to be effective than the type of comprehensive sanctions that were employed against countries such as Iraq and Yugoslavia in the first half of the 1990s. Morgan and Schwebach, while generally pessimistic about the effectiveness of sanctions, claim that targeted sanctions could be a more effective option (Morgan and Schwebach, 1997: 46-47), while Dashti-Gibson et al argue that if the goal of sanctions is to moderate behaviour then financial

¹ Two reports were published by the Swiss Federal Office for Foreign Economic Affairs: 'Expert Seminar on Targeting UN Financial Sanctions', March 17-19 1998, and '2nd International Seminar on Targeting UN Financial Sanctions', March 29-31 1999. Available from: http://www.seco.admin.ch/themen/aussenwirtschaft/sanktionen/smart_sanctions/unterseite00361/index.html?lang=en.

² 'Design and Implementation of Arms Embargoes, Travel and Aviation Related Sanctions: Results of the "Bonn-Berlin" Process', edited by Michael Brzoska. Available at: <http://www.bicc.de/events/unsanc/index.php>.

³ 'Making Targeted Sanctions Effective: Guidelines for the Implementation of UN Policy Options', available at: http://www.smartsanctions.se/stockholm_process/reports/Final%20report%20complete.pdf.

sanctions targeted at the ruling elite have a greater chance of success than do trade sanctions that inflict punishment on the entire population of the target state (Dashti-Gibson et al, 1997: 615). However, some remain sceptical that targeted sanctions are any more likely to be effective than comprehensive sanctions, with Haass describing them as 'only a partial solution' (Haass, 1997: 79). Haass argues that designing and implementing such sanctions is very difficult, particularly when the target state is run by an authoritarian government (Haass, 1997: 79-80). Similar concerns are also mentioned by Van Brabant (Van Brabant, 1999: 4).

One argument in favour of financial sanctions is that they may reduce the advantages that target regimes often enjoy when sanctions take the form of a comprehensive trade embargo. Thus, in the case of financial sanctions it may be more difficult for the regime in power to rally support against such sanctions as they will affect only a small section of the population, and could also deny the regime any potential earnings from smuggling and black market activities (Van Brabant, 1999: 18). However, again largely absent from the debate is consideration of their impact on domestic opposition forces in the target state. Rather, the debate regarding the differential impact of 'smart' sanctions has been focused on their purported ability to have less severe humanitarian consequences for the civilian population of the target state, and the extent to which they are more or less likely to lead to the type of behaviour modification demanded by those imposing the sanctions.

From the above discussion it is clear that there is a need for consideration of the impact of sanctions on domestic opposition forces operating within the target state. This is the case with respect to both comprehensive sanctions and also targeted sanctions. As Serbia experienced both types of sanctions at different times during the 1990s it affords the opportunity to consider the way in which both impacted on the

democratic opposition parties that were operating at that time, and to examine the issue of whether the impact of these approaches differed.

The International Community and Serbia's Democratic Opposition Parties

The goal of the democratic opposition parties in Serbia during the Milošević era was to effect regime change through the removal of Milošević from power and the establishment of a democratic political order. As a number of theorists have emphasised, regime change and democratisation are processes that have been amenable to international influence, particularly those that have occurred in post-communist Europe (Diamandouros and Larrabee, 2000: 52; Pridham, 2000a: 13; Whitehead, 1996: 3). However, as Pridham, among others, acknowledges, the term 'international dimension' is a 'collective term for diverse external factors and influences and a spread of actors that are located or originated outside a country's borders'; given this, Pridham notes that it is 'misleading to emphasize the international dimension as if it were some unitary experience' (Pridham, 2000a: 285). Pravda provides a succinct breakdown of the various elements that may be considered as international factors in the transition process: 'transnational phenomena, regionalism, non-governmental organizations, and state as well as international institutional actors' (Pravda, 2001: 7). From this list, what is of concern within this study are states and international institutional actors. In his discussion of the role of individual states and international institutions in the transition process, Pravda notes the emphasis that is placed on democracy promotion by both states, and international political, economic and security institution (Pravda, 2001: 9-15).

However, in the case of Milošević's Serbia, while the democratic opposition parties emphasised that a democratic Serbia was an essential prerequisite for lasting peace and stability in the Balkans, the outbreak of war in the former-Yugoslavia meant that international actors 'attributed priority to peace building over the promotion of democratic goals' (Vukadinović, 2001: 437). International preoccupation with stability in the Balkans and international perceptions regarding how best to achieve this meant that until 1999 international policy with respect to Serbia paid little attention to Serbia's internal political order. This situation changed abruptly following the Kosovo conflict and indictment of Milošević and several key regime figures by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY). Following this, the IC's focus with respect to Serbia was firmly on Serbia's internal order. At this time the IC and the democratic opposition parties were, for once, pursuing the same goal: regime change in Serbia. As such, Carothers' comment on US policy in this time period is equally applicable to the other international actors involved in formulating policy with respect to Serbia:

During the war in Bosnia ... US policy toward Serbia, Croatia, and the rest of the former Yugoslavia had little to do with democracy. The administration felt it was necessary to deal cooperatively with Milošević in Belgrade and Tudjman in Zagreb, dictators though they might be, for the sake of peacemaking goals. After the Kosovo crisis and military action there, however, promoting democracy in Serbia – or at least ousting Milošević – became something of a priority (Carothers, 2000: 5).

Given this, it is important to remember when considering the impact of international actions on the democratic opposition that for much of this time period the democratic opposition parties and the IC were prioritising different objectives.

Throughout the 1990s the democratic opposition parties in Serbia used a variety of different strategies in its efforts to remove the Milošević regime from power - including contesting elections, boycotting elections, urging the regime to negotiate fair electoral conditions and organising mass demonstrations. However, until 2000 all of these campaigns were unsuccessful, with the partial exception of the victory of the opposition's Zajedno coalition in local elections held in 1996 and the successful defence of that victory following regime attempts to annul it. This happened in a context in which Milošević and his SPS party experienced declining popularity. In fact, as Gordy noted in 1999, 'Aside from its long list of failures, the party in power has not once received a majority of votes in an election,' (Gordy, 1999: 1). This state of affairs led Pavlović to claim that, until the 2000 elections, the Serbian opposition, and in particular the leaders of its main parties, was 'the worst opposition in Europe', because while it had the opportunity to do so, it failed to defeat Milošević for ten years⁴ (Pavlović, 2001: 2).

Undoubtedly, the environment in which it operated contributed to the opposition's failure. While Milošević's Serbia had many of the features of a formal democracy its reality was far from democratic, and one of the means by which Milošević and his allies maintained power was through electoral fraud and manipulation. A report by CeSID, the Centre for Free Elections and Democracy, notes that, from 1990 to 2000 there was not one free and fair election held in Serbia⁵ (CeSID, 2000: 9). Similarly, Milošević's survival in power is also partly attributable to his control of much of the Serbian media throughout the 1990s, a factor that is listed as one of the key reasons for the SPS's success in all federal and republican elections contested between 1990 and 1996 (Goati, 1998: 17; Sekelj, 2000: 61).

⁴ Author's translation.

⁵ Pavlović suggests that Milošević most probably lost the 1992 elections in which he competed against Milan Panić, then Yugoslav prime minister, for the Serbian presidency (Pavlović, 2001: 4).

However, as Pribićević notes, Milošević's manipulation and repression cannot wholly account for the opposition's continued failure⁶ (Pribićević, 1997: 34). This is clear when consideration is given to the fact that throughout the 1990s the Milošević regime became increasingly repressive and as such, when the opposition did succeed against Milošević, this was in spite of the fact that it was operating in an environment that was, in many ways, less favourable than any which it had faced before. As such, at the time of the September 2000 elections, few commentators expected that this would lead to the fall of the Milošević regime.

There are numerous explanations for the longevity of the Milošević regime, but arguing for or against any of these is not the purpose of this study. What is of central concern here is the manner in which two factors that have been considered as being significant in terms of the regime's survival have interacted throughout this time period, those factors being the weakness of the democratic opposition in Serbia and international coercive policies. The issue that will be considered in this interaction is whether international policy may have either directly exacerbated weaknesses present in the Serbian democratic opposition or created conditions in which the opposition was significantly disadvantaged in its efforts to remove the regime.

In order to evaluate the impact of international policy on the democratic opposition, and to consider the question of whether it exacerbated the opposition's weaknesses or undermined its ability to operate effectively against the regime, it is useful to consider the general question of what constitutes effective action for a democratic opposition in an environment such as that which prevailed in Serbia under

⁶ Author's translation.

Milošević, and to this end Stepan's work on the tasks of a democratic opposition in an authoritarian regime is useful (Stepan, 2001).

The Tasks of a Democratic Opposition

The presence of a political opposition is a fundamental part of any democratic political system, but in spite of this, as Blondel notes, 'the analysis of the characteristics of opposition, in democracies or elsewhere, has advanced rather less than other aspects of comparative politics' (Blondel, 1997: 462). Similarly, Gel'man remarks that the 'study of political opposition is by no means the most popular field in contemporary political science' (Gel'man, 2005: 228). While there is a relative lack of attention paid to oppositions in general, this is even more the case with respect to political opposition in authoritarian or non-democratic regimes where they operate in significantly different conditions to their counterparts in liberal democracies (Franklin, 2002: 521). In attempting to devise a 'theory of political opposition in the contemporary world' Blondel observes that the 'factors which account for the nature and character of opposition are so numerous and their relative incidence is so unclear that all that can be done is to suggest some trends and possible evolutions' (Blondel, 1997: 478). Some analysts argue that this is particularly true when considering opposition in authoritarian states. Blondel himself advises caution 'in attempting to delineate the dynamics of political opposition in authoritarian regimes' (Blondel, 1997: 484), while Posusney argues that a possible reason for the lack of attention to how democratic opposition parties operate in authoritarian regimes 'may be the difficulty of generalization, given that how vulnerable authoritarian rulers are to opposition critiques and pressures will vary from country to country and, within

countries, with changing political and economic circumstances' (Posusney, 2002: 47-48).

Political opposition has, nevertheless, received some recent attention within debates regarding the ending of the authoritarian regimes in the formerly communist countries of Europe. However, within this literature, the role of democratic opposition parties per se has not received significant attention. Indeed, as Lawson points out, in much of the democratisation literature political parties are largely absent, noting that while the 'importance of this kind of opposition is supported implicitly in democratization studies, it is rarely treated explicitly' (Lawson, 1993: 184). Within the context of the way opposition is treated in the democratisation literature, Stepan notes the presence of two bodies of theory dealing with 'the role of the democratic opposition in the processes of democratization'. The first of these concerns 'pacted transitions' while the second deals with 'the oppositional role of "civil society against the state"' (Stepan, 2001: 167). While clearly the role of political parties in pacted transitions is potentially significant, the conditions needed for such a transition clearly did not exist in Milošević's Serbia. As such, the literature on pacted transitions is not of great utility within the context of this study. Similarly, while the role of civil society is undoubtedly of great importance in any democracy, whether in transition or well established, the focus of this study is on political parties. A further limitation of the democratisation literature in analysing Serbia's political parties is the severely coercive international policies to which it was subjected and its image as a pariah state for much of this time. Indeed, Pridham argues that pariah regimes ought to be considered 'as a category in its own right, all the more so as it hardly features in the democratization literature' (Pridham, 2001: 66).

Notwithstanding the above-mentioned limitations, it is, nevertheless, possible to identify some general points about the types of tasks and tactics that democratic opposition parties, operating in regimes such as Milošević's, need to employ in order to increase their effectiveness in opposing an authoritarian regime. However, it is first necessary to clarify the type of authoritarian regime that is being examined within the context of this study. Authoritarian or non-democratic regimes differ considerably in terms of how they maintain power, the level of repression they employ and the extent to which they are prepared to tolerate the presence of opposition forces. This is acknowledged by Stepan when he mentions 'the continuum of changing relationships that characterize authoritarian systems,' with 'a strong regime ruling in an atmosphere of widespread fear,' and 'a weakened and eroding regime' occupying opposite ends of this continuum (Stepan, 2001: 160).

As Diamond notes, in the past, non-democratic regimes generally attempted to exert political control and maintain power through overtly authoritarian methods such as banning opposition parties or even the holding of elections themselves. However, in recent decades 'hybrid regimes' – those containing elements of both democracy and authoritarianism – have become increasingly common (Diamond, 2002: 24). As such, analysts have devoted considerable attention to attempting to classify the numerous variants of hybrid regime that have developed and which lie somewhere between liberal democracies and closed authoritarianism. According to Diamond, non-democratic regimes can be divided into 'those with multiparty electoral competition of some kind (variously termed "electoral authoritarian," "pseudodemocratic," or "hybrid") and those that are politically closed' (Diamond, 2002: 25). Clearly, Milošević's Serbia can be counted among the electoral authoritarian regimes, as elections regularly took place in Serbia and the Yugoslavia

throughout the 1990s. However, while it is acknowledged that the line between various regime types cannot always be clearly drawn, Diamond notes a further distinction between those electoral authoritarian regimes than can be considered to be competitive authoritarian regimes and those that are hegemonic authoritarian regimes (Diamond, 2002: 25). What differentiates competitive authoritarian regimes from hegemonic regimes is the presence of democratic institutions that 'offer an important channel through which the opposition may seek power;' in contrast, a hegemonic regime is one in which 'democratic rules simply serve as to legitimate an existing autocratic leadership.' As such, in a competitive authoritarian regime, 'even though democratic institutions may be badly flawed, both authoritarian incumbents and their opponents must take them seriously' (Levitsky and Way, 2002: 54).

When some of the characteristics of competitive authoritarian regimes are considered, it is clear that Milošević's Serbia qualifies as such a regime. According to Levitsky and Way, although in a competitive authoritarian regime 'elections are regularly held and are generally free of massive fraud, incumbents routinely abuse state resources, deny the opposition adequate media coverage, harass opposition candidates and their supporters, and in some cases manipulate electoral results' (Levitsky and Way, 2002: 53). In general, while Milošević's regime veered in the direction of outright authoritarianism towards the end of his rule, throughout much of the 1990s, such a description fits well with the situation in Milošević's Serbia.

Democratic opposition parties that operate in such an environment face considerably different challenges than do their counterparts in liberal democratic regimes. As Diamond notes, while it is possible for the opposition to be victorious against such a regime, 'it requires a level of opposition mobilization, unity, skill, and heroism far beyond what would normally be required for victory in a democracy'

(Diamond, 2002: 24). Furthermore, while elections in a competitive authoritarian context may hold out the possibility of an opposition victory, it is also the case that such contests can be used by the regime as ‘an instrument of authoritarian control’ (Schedler, 2002: 36). As such, according to Posusney, for opposition parties ‘the invitation to participate in controlled elections represents both opportunities and risks’ (Posusney, 2002: 48).

Given the environment in which they operate, the tasks of opposition parties operating in competitive authoritarian regimes differ from those of opposition parties in liberal democracies. This is evident in Posusney’s discussion of the strategies that opposition parties can employ when confronted with the prospect of elections in an authoritarian setting. These include boycotting the election, forming an electoral coalition among opposition parties, monitoring the election, and trying to influence the rules under which the elections will take place (Posusney, 2002: 47-52). While the formation of multi-party electoral coalitions is not unusual in liberal democracies, electoral competition in a democratic setting would rarely involve strategies such as electoral boycotts or attempting to alter the rules of the game. As such, in order to evaluate the effectiveness of democratic opposition parties operating in such an environment it must be kept in mind that this will involve different tasks than those needed for an effective opposition in a liberal democracy. Stepan’s work on democratic opposition movements in non-democratic regimes is particularly useful in helping to understand these tasks (Stepan, 2001).

Stepan considers that a non-democratic regime can be seen as ‘a set of relationships of domination’, and asserts that the main parties to such relationships are

- (1) the core group of regime supporters (who find that their political, economic, social or institutional interests are best served under the status

quo); (2) the coercive apparatus that maintains the regime in power; (3) the regime's passive supporters; (4) the active opponents of the regime; and (5) the passive opponents of the regime (Stepan, 2001: 160).

He argues that the task of the regime's active democratic opponents is to alter the power relations between all components of the regime such that authoritarianism is weakened, while the conditions for democratisation are improved (Stepan 2001: 160). Given this approach, Stepan outlines functions of democratic opposition movements in authoritarian regimes, which he lists 'in roughly ascending order of complexity' as being to resist integration into the regime; to guard 'zones of autonomy' against the regime; to dispute the regime's legitimacy; to raise the costs to the regime of authoritarian rule; and to create a credible democratic alternative to the regime (Stepan, 2001: 162). Through carrying out these various tasks, Stepan considers that the democratic opposition can contribute to a process of 'authoritarian erosion' whereby the passive, and possibly even active supporters of a non-democratic regime may be induced to switch sides and become passive or even active opponents of the regime (Stepan, 2001: 160-162).

For Stepan, a democratic opposition movement consists of more than just democratic opposition parties and his discussion includes other bodies such as trade unions, religious and cultural groups, and other civil society organisations. In addition, Stepan also acknowledges the range of possible non-democratic regimes. As such, it is necessary to consider the tasks Stepan outlines in order to identify how they might be applied to democratic opposition parties – a key element of the active opposition - operating in a competitive authoritarian regime such as that which existed in Serbia in the 1990s.

Resisting integration into the regime

For Stepan, resisting integration into the regime 'is the *sine qua non* for an opposition in the first place' (Stepan, 2001: 162). As such, if the active opposition allows itself to be 'co-opted into authoritarian institutions' it 'will have ceased to exist' (Stepan, 2001: 162). In order to be able to carry out the other tasks of a democratic opposition, the active opposition must maintain 'some independent ideological, cultural, and above all institutional existence' (Stepan, 2001: 162). An easily identifiable example of co-optation would be if an opposition party decided to abandon its opposition status and to enter into government with the authoritarian regime. However, Stepan's description of what is necessary to avoid integration into the regime makes clear that such an explicit step is not necessary for an opposition party to be co-opted. This is also illustrated in the work of other authors who have argued that the presence of opposition in an authoritarian regime does not necessarily imply the weakening of that regime, but may in fact contribute to the survival in power of the authoritarian elite (Albrecht, 1995; Zartman, 1988). In his study of opposition in Egypt, Albrecht argues that, through repression and cooptation, Egypt's opposition parties are prevented 'from being serious contenders for power. Rather, they are players utilized to give the impression of a multi-party system which, however, exists only in formal terms, to obscure the reality of a dominant party regime' (Albrecht, 2005: 384). According to Albrecht, Egypt's opposition parties have been co-opted to the extent that they 'have come to a tacit agreement that Egypt is not yet "ripe" for democracy' (Albrecht, 2005: 384). Thus, without relinquishing their formal opposition status, Egypt's opposition parties have not maintained an independent ideological, cultural and institutional existence and can, therefore, be

considered to have been co-opted by the Mubarek regime, in spite of the fact that they remain, formally, opposition parties. As such, in the context of a competitive authoritarian regime such as Milošević's Serbia, to carry out the task of resisting integration into the regime, democratic opposition parties must ensure that they provide neither explicit nor tacit support to the authoritarian government.

Guarding zones of autonomy

If the opposition resists incorporation into the regime, according to Stepan 'its next task (in order of survival imperatives) is to encourage the growth of passive opposition' which can be done either through 'contesting the government's claims to legitimacy' or through maintaining 'some zones of autonomy in which nonregime organizations can operate' (Stepan, 2001: 162). While Stepan does not explicitly define 'zones of autonomy', he discusses the need to maintain not just political parties, but also organisations such as trade unions, and religious and cultural organisations. He points out that the 'more that new or preexisting democratic trade unions, parties, or community movements take root and flourish, the less space is left for the implantation of new-model authoritarian institutions' (Stepan, 2001: 163). As such, his conception of guarding zones of autonomy implies ensuring the continued existence and growth of opposition organisations, including democratic opposition parties. The more that the democratic opposition can maintain these zones of autonomy, the more effectively can they perform the other tasks of a democratic opposition.

One of the characteristics of a competitive authoritarian regime such as the Milošević regime is the holding of multi-party elections, albeit under grossly unfair

conditions, and as such, the existence of political parties is also a feature of such regimes. Thus, in terms of guarding zones of autonomy in the sense of ensuring their continued existence, democratic opposition parties in such regimes face a considerably less daunting task than if they were operating in a more traditional authoritarian environment. Although harassment of opposition parties was a feature of Milošević's rule, throughout the 1990s they were allowed to exist, and while there were very occasional suggestions that particular parties might be banned, this never occurred. As such, throughout the time period considered in this study, the democratic opposition parties in Serbia continued to exist, although the Milošević regime ensured that the space in which they operated remained somewhat narrow. Thus, given the competitive authoritarian nature of the Milošević regime, the task of ensuring continued existence was not a central issue for Serbia's democratic opposition parties.

However, while Stepan does emphasise the importance of the continued existence of democratic opposition parties in his discussion of guarding zones of autonomy, he also implies that this task of a democratic opposition goes beyond the mere survival of institutions as is clear from his comments on the need for democratic institutions to 'grow' and 'flourish' and thereby enable the democratic opposition to carry out its other tasks more effectively 'while building support for a democratic alternative' (Stepan, 2001: 163). For this reason, Stepan argues, 'grassroots campaigning to create non-or antiregime subsystems – and not direct assaults on the coercive elite-should be the active opposition's main order of business' (Stepan, 2001: 163).

While building support for a democratic alternative is certainly an important activity in any non-democratic environment, what Stepan does not acknowledge here is that in a competitive authoritarian system such as Milošević's Serbia - characterised

by the holding of multiparty elections even if they are neither free nor fair – democratic opposition parties have powerful incentives to directly challenge the non-democratic regime. As noted above, while it is difficult for democratic opposition parties to unseat authoritarian regimes in these electoral contests, it is nevertheless possible and, as experience has shown, including in Serbia itself but also in other states such as the Ukraine, elections can provide an important focus for opposition activity. The attempts of non-democratic elites to deny electoral victories to opposition parties following elections in these states provided the impetus for mobilising large segments of the population to stage the massive demonstrations that ultimately led to the downfall of these regimes.

Stepan notes that the purpose of guarding zones of autonomy is to encourage the growth of passive opposition to the regime and he distinguishes guarding zones of autonomy from contesting the government's legitimacy as an alternative means of increasing the level of passive opposition. As such, what is at issue here is what is involved in 'guarding zones of autonomy' and thereby increasing passive opposition for democratic opposition parties operating in a competitive authoritarian environment. In his discussion of guarding zones of autonomy, Stepan notes that the more effectively a democratic opposition can fulfil this task, 'the less space is left for the implantation of new-model authoritarian institutions' (Stepan, 2001: 163). While clearly the continued survival of opposition organisations and political parties (institutional autonomy) is important in this regard, democratic opposition parties also need to develop and maintain zones of ideological autonomy if they are to increase their ability to successfully challenge a competitive authoritarian regime. While democratic opposition parties need to maintain ideological *independence*, and this will be discussed more fully when considering the need to create a credible alternative

to the non-democratic regime they are opposing, guarding zones of ideological autonomy is an important consideration for political parties that are operating in an environment where the opportunity exists to challenge the regime in the electoral arena. While this is, to a certain extent, implied in Stepan's discussion, he does not make this point explicitly. In the context of this research, however, the need for Serbia's democratic opposition parties to guard ideological zones of autonomy will be considered as one of the central tasks of those parties.

Competitive authoritarian regimes such as Milošević's Serbia have great potential to set the agenda for political competition within the electoral arena, invariably to the detriment of the democratic opposition parties that are challenging them. This was clearly the case in Milošević's Serbia where Milošević, primarily through the state-controlled media, ensured that for much of the 1990s political discourse was dominated by questions of national and state survival, war, and international conspiracies against Serbia. This was clearly advantageous for the Milošević regime in the early 1990s when, in spite of one of the most severe incidences of hyperinflation, political discourse in Serbia was dominated by issues of nationalism and war. Attempting to influence the political agenda in a system such as Milošević's Serbia, and as such maintain a zone of ideological autonomy, clearly poses enormous challenges for democratic opposition parties but is nevertheless an important task for these actors in their attempts to challenge the authoritarian regime. As such, in the context of a regime such as Milošević's Serbia, in order for democratic opposition parties to fulfil the task of guarding zones of autonomy, what is of greatest importance is ideological autonomy, as institutional autonomy is relatively secure given the nature of competitive authoritarian regimes. Given this, when considering whether Serbia's democratic parties were successful in their task of guarding zones of

autonomy, it will be ideological, and not institutional autonomy that will be considered. To this end, what will be examined is the extent to which the democratic opposition parties were able to influence the political agenda in order to limit the ability of the regime to ensure that issues that would have been detrimental to it were excluded from political discourse.

Disputing the regime's legitimacy and raising the costs of authoritarian rule

Although listed separately in Stepan's list of tasks for a democratic opposition in an authoritarian state, disputing the regime's legitimacy and raising the costs of authoritarian rule are clearly linked: if the opposition can successfully raise questions about the legitimacy of the regime, this will inevitably increase the costs of authoritarian rule. As Stepan himself notes, if the costs of authoritarian rule 'are raised high enough, they can rob the government of much of its legitimacy in the eyes of both its active and passive supporters' (Stepan, 2001: 164). In terms of raising the costs of authoritarian rule, Stepan suggests that this can be achieved by encouraging activities such as strikes, protests, and 'noncooperation generally' thereby demonstrating that the regime is not 'securely in control of the political system' (Stepan, 2001: 164). He also states that a key task for the active opposition is to clearly highlight the costs to society of the regime's policies to such an extent that it cannot rely on tacit support to maintain power, and is thus forced to rely more heavily on coercion (Stepan, 2001: 163).

In terms of disputing the legitimacy of an authoritarian regime, Stepan suggests that the democratic opposition should attempt to undermine the regime both internally and internationally (Stepan, 2001: 163). As Posusney notes, when

authoritarian rulers decide to hold multiparty elections 'they are vesting part of their legitimacy in a competitive electoral process and the constitutional framework that accompanies this opening.' This, she notes 'gives democratic forces cards to play' (Posusney, 2002: 47). As such, elections provide democratic opposition parties with opportunities to question the legitimacy of the regime, whether through deciding not to contest the election under the prevailing undemocratic conditions; through attempting to alter the rules under which the elections are held; or through highlighting the inadequacy of the electoral provisions, both domestically and internationally.

Stepan sees potential gains for the opposition if it can undermine the regime's external legitimacy, pointing out that 'the active opposition should appeal to world opinion by documenting and publicizing the regime's most flagrant violations of civilized standards of conduct' (Stepan, 2001: 163). This, he argues, can increase international condemnation and further increase the costs of authoritarian rule. This implies a need on the part of the democratic opposition parties to maintain and develop international contacts where possible, as this provides a channel through which they can highlight the deficiencies in the regime, and appeal for international support in their campaigns against it.

As such, in order to carry out the tasks of disputing the legitimacy of the authoritarian regime, and raising the costs of authoritarian rule, democratic opposition parties must make every effort possible to demonstrate to the population of the non-democratic state the nature of the authoritarian regime and the costs that such a regime imposes on the society over which it rules. In addition, democratic opposition parties must also make efforts to ensure that external actors are fully aware of the

abuses committed by the authoritarian regime in an effort to undermine its external legitimacy.

Creating a credible democratic alternative

According to Stepan, the democratic opposition to an authoritarian regime needs to combine elements of both eroding authoritarianism while simultaneously constructing a credible democratic alternative. To a large extent Stepan considers this to be important in ensuring that the political order that emerges after the authoritarian regime is removed, is itself democratic and not merely an alternative authoritarian regime. This is evident in his statement that ‘If the opposition attends only to the task of erosion, as opposed to that of construction, then the odds are that any future change will merely be a shift from one authoritarian government to another, rather than a change from authoritarianism to democracy’ (Stepan, 2001: 165). However, in a competitive authoritarian regime where the democratic opposition parties have regular opportunities to challenge the authorities in multiparty elections, the construction of a credible alternative can be an important element in removing the authoritarian regime. The necessity for an opposition to present a credible alternative to an authoritarian regime is also noted by Berneo, who claims that ‘authoritarian regimes will not be transformed unless someone presents a “preferable” and (to be specific) “feasible” alternative’ (Berneo, 1990: 368).

Stepan recognises that opposition unity is an important element in presenting a credible alternative to an autocratic regime, but, in common with a number of analysts, he is nonetheless mindful of the potential limits to such unity (Blondel, 1997; Posusney, 2002; Albrecht, 2005; Stepan, 2001). Due to the potential difficulties

of reaching agreement among a number of democratic opposition parties, Stepan argues that they ought to focus attention on trying to agree a 'formula for the conduct of democratic contestation' and should avoid trying to formulate agreement on issues of policy because 'Premature wrangling over substantive issues could not only divide democrats, but could do so in a dangerously polarizing fashion' (Stepan, 2001: 165). However, while agreement on procedural issues is undoubtedly important, democratic opposition parties also need to build popular support, or to use Stepan's terms, to increase the level of passive and active opposition to the ruling regime. As such, in order to gain popular support, particularly in a repressive context in which the costs of supporting the opposition can be high, democratic opposition parties will need to present a credible and coherent programme and policies, especially if they intend to challenge a competitive authoritarian regime in elections, difficult as this may be to achieve. As such, insofar as a united opposition is an important element in terms of presenting a credible alternative to the ruling regime, agreement on substantive issues of policy is likely to be necessary. Furthermore, reaching agreement on the rules of political contestation in a competitive authoritarian regime is also a difficult undertaking. Posusney is considerably more pessimistic than Stepan on this point, noting the problems and dilemmas that can face democratic opposition parties faced with the prospect of contesting multiparty elections in an authoritarian regime. She notes that ideological differences between opposition parties; their relative size; their goals and prospects in any given election; together with the extent of their internal cohesiveness, make it difficult for opposition parties to agree joint strategies when confronted with an election in grossly unfair conditions (Posusney, 2002, 47-50).

In his discussion of presenting a credible alternative, Stepan seems to be considering this only in the domestic context: if the opposition can present a credible

alternative this will increase the likelihood of regime supporters becoming regime opponents and thereby weaken and undermine the regime. While this is undoubtedly of great importance, Stepan neglects to draw attention to the fact that opposition groups frequently seek international support and as such also have to appear credible to potential foreign allies in addition to potential domestic supporters. While he does note the importance of international support in his discussion on questioning the regime's legitimacy, his model is somewhat limited by not acknowledging the need for a democratic opposition to present a credible alternative to potential foreign allies in order to secure this support. This was certainly the case with the democratic opposition parties in Serbia who sought support from Western powers such as the US and the EC/EU and as such needed to be perceived as a credible alternative to the Milošević regime from an IC perspective in addition to presenting a credible alternative in the democratic context. However, given that the democratic opposition and the IC were prioritising different objectives for much of the 1990s, the requirement of presenting a credible alternative to the Milošević regime in the domestic context – which was for much of the 1990s dominated by issues related to the Serbian national question – while also presenting a credible alternative to the IC – which was firmly opposed to the creation of any sort of greater Serbia – may, at times, have been incompatible.

Given the above discussion of how Stepan's tasks of a democratic opposition in an authoritarian regime might be applied to democratic opposition parties operating in a competitive authoritarian regime such as Milošević's Serbia, it is clear that with some modifications, Stepan's model is a useful way of considering what it is that democratic opposition parties in such an environment need to do in order to weaken the authoritarian regime in the hope of removing it from power. As such, it provides a

means by which to assess the effectiveness of the opposition parties' campaigns against the Milošević regime: the greater the extent to which they could carry out these tasks, the more effective they can be considered to be. As such, when assessing the impact of international policy on Serbia's democratic opposition parties, what will be considered will be the extent to which the IC either undermined or enhanced the democratic opposition parties' ability to carry out four tasks: resisting integration into the regime; guarding zones of ideological autonomy; disputing the legitimacy of the regime and raising the costs of authoritarian rule; and presenting a credible alternative both internally and internationally.

The Weaknesses of the Serbian Democratic Opposition

A further consideration also needs to be taken into account when considering the impact of international policy on the effectiveness of Serbia's democratic opposition parties and this relates to the weaknesses that characterised Serbian democratic opposition during the 1990s. The most significant of these were the extent of opposition disunity, opposition nationalism, and the inability of the Serbian democratic opposition parties to present a credible alternative to the Milošević regime. As will be discussed below, these weaknesses, at times, undermined the ability of the democratic opposition parties to carry out some of the tasks outlined above, and as such reduced the effectiveness of the Serbian democratic opposition parties in their challenges to the Milošević regime. As such, when evaluating the impact of international policy on Serbia's democratic opposition parties it will be important to consider the extent to which this either exacerbated or helped to overcome these weaknesses.

Opposition Disunity

One of the most frequently cited sources of opposition weakness in Serbia during the 1990s was the extent of disunity and fragmentation within the opposition (Pribićević, 1997: 35; Anastasijević, 2000: 14; Sekelj, 2000: 60). According to Goati, conflict between the main opposition parties enabled Milošević to rule throughout the 1990s in spite of the failure of his party to gain an absolute majority in the republican parliamentary elections of 1992, 1993 and 1997 (Goati, 2000: 12). Similarly, Sekelj cites 'fragmentation of the opposition' as one of four reasons for Milošević's victory in elections in Serbia throughout the 1990s (Sekelj, 2000: 59). This disunity hindered the democratic opposition parties in carrying out two of the tasks outlined by Stepan: presenting a credible alternative to the Milošević regime, and resisting integration into the regime.

The lack of unity of the Serbian opposition on issues of policy, and in particular national policy, will be discussed in some detail below. However, Serbia's democratic opposition parties were sometimes disunited even in terms of the strategies that should be adopted against the Milošević regime. Pribićević draws attention to a particular facet of opposition disunity that he considers to have been particularly damaging: the lack of unity in the opposition parties' relations towards Milošević's SPS. Pribićević points out that some parties either directly or indirectly co-operated with the SPS⁷ (Pribićević, 1997: 38). This is a factor that Ilić also mentions alleging that 'the opposition acts constantly as a second, reserve, echelon of the regime; its leaders compete fiercely against each other mutually lowering their

⁷ Author's translation

worth⁸ (Ilić, 2000: 3). While it is clear that a divided opposition would indirectly be to the advantage of the Milošević regime, Cevallos argues that Milošević also manipulated this friction in order to help him retain power, pointing in particular to the leaking of information about meetings held between Milošević and some opposition leaders at a time when the opposition was staging major demonstrations to protest at the annulment of their victories in local elections held at the end of 1996, and also to Milošević bringing one of the most significant of Serbia's democratic opposition parties, the Serbian Renewal Movement (SPO – Srpski Pokret Obnove), into government around the time of the NATO bombing in 1999 (Cevallos, 2001: 3-4). As such, at times, some elements within the democratic opposition failed to fulfil the most central task of resisting integration into the regime. While this is most clearly seen in the case of the SPO's decision to enter the federal government in 1999, another of Serbia's main democratic opposition parties, the Democratic Party (DS – Demokratska Stranka), while not going so far as to enter government with Milošević, did negotiate with the Milošević regime in the mid-1990s. Thus, to varying extents and at particular points in time, some of Serbia's democratic opposition parties were co-opted by the Milošević regime. In spite of these dealings with Milošević, however, both the SPO and the DS can be considered as opposition parties for most of the time period covered in this study. As will be seen in chapter 2, none of the parties chosen for analysis here exemplifies what could be considered an 'ideal' democratic opposition party, but both the DS and the SPO, while they struggled at times to resist being co-opted into the regime, on balance remained opposition parties.

⁸ In their discussions of the opposition, both Pribičević and Ilić include the SRS, which will not be considered as part of the democratic opposition in this study, partly because of its frequent co-operation with the Milošević regime. The point, nonetheless, remains valid even with the narrower conception of the democratic opposition that is used here, particularly in relation to the SPO which not only negotiated with the SPS regarding the possibility of entering government on a number of occasions, but which, in 1999, entered the federal government with the SPS, JUL and the SRS.

Opposition disunity undoubtedly had an impact on the democratic opposition parties to effectively oppose the Milošević regime. At times it limited the potential for co-ordinated anti-regime campaigns and activities. A further consequence was the disintegration of successful and popular opposition coalitions, most notably Zajedno in the mid-1990s, which seriously damaged the credibility of the democratic opposition parties (Judah, 2000: 2; Fatić, 1997: 150). Pavlović singles out the break up of Zajedno in his discussion of opposition behaviour, claiming the central conflict between Djindjić and Drašković was over the question of which of them was the leader of the opposition. The result of this, according to Pavlović, was the break up of Zajedno and three more years of Milošević's rule⁹ (Pavlović, 2001: 3). Furthermore, in terms of carrying out the tasks noted by Stepan, opposition disunity undermined the ability of the democratic opposition parties to present a credible alternative to the Milošević regime, and to resist integration into the regime.

While the presence of disunity within the Serbian democratic opposition is beyond dispute, there is less attention paid to the factors that contributed to or caused such disunity. While authors such as Cevallos note that Milošević did much to exacerbate already-existing divisions within the opposition, and Pavlović notes the centrality of the personal animosity between Djindjić and Drašković, little attention is paid to whether or not international policy may also have been a contributory factor. As such, in the context of this research, the question of whether or not international policy with respect to Serbia may have exacerbated existing divisions within the opposition and so undermined the effectiveness of the Serbian democratic opposition will be addressed.

⁹ Author's translation.

Opposition Nationalism

A further characteristic of the Serbian democratic opposition that has been highlighted as a weakness is its alleged nationalism, and its attempts to compete with Milošević on national issues, which was considered to be Milošević's strongest terrain¹⁰ (Pribičević, 1997: 42). However, the extent to which Serbia's democratic opposition parties espoused positions that were as nationalist as, or even more nationalist than those of the Milošević regime, requires clarification and will be one of the central questions addressed in this research. With this qualification in mind, it is, nevertheless, undoubtedly the case that most major political parties in Serbia did espouse nationalist positions to some degree during the 1990s and analysts generally agree that, at least at times, this undermined the ability of the democratic opposition to effectively oppose the Milošević regime particularly in terms of presenting a credible alternative to the regime.

As noted above in the discussion on the tasks of the democratic opposition parties, in order to secure both domestic and international support, the democratic opposition needed to present a credible alternative both to potential voters in Serbia, and also to those IC actors whose support it sought. Clearly, given the extent to which the central concerns of the IC in its dealings with Serbia between 1992 and 2000 related to issues involving Serbian nationalism, a hardline nationalist position would have seriously diminished its chances of gaining such international support as a strongly nationalist opposition would not have represented a credible alternative to the Milošević regime from an IC perspective. However, for the first half of the 1990s the Serbian national question was also central in domestic terms, possibly leaving the

¹⁰ Author's translation.

opposition in the position that if it were to take positions on the national question that would be considered acceptable to the IC, this may have undermined their ability to present themselves as a credible alternative to the Milošević regime in the domestic context.

In terms of Serbia's internal politics this factor was important mainly in the early to mid-1990s, when, as Goati states, 'the axis of political controversies in all the republican and federal elections ... consisted of issues of national and state identity,' which he attributes to the protracted disintegration of the former Yugoslavia and the war that accompanied this (Goati, 1998: 17). Stojanović points out that, at the time of the establishment of political parties in Serbia at the beginning of the 1990s, most parties from the regime and the opposition, had the same national agendas, and as such were divided more in relation to their positions vis-à-vis communism, than in relation to the national question.¹¹ As a result, she claims, 'the parties wasted time outdoing each other and the government in 'patriotism', and in this game, the party in power had incomparably stronger arguments' (Stojanović, 2000: 456-7). Similarly, Mihailović notes that all of the bigger parties in Serbia, at least briefly, have at some time championed the nationalist cause¹² (Mihailović, 1997: 58). As a result, he claims that the opposition parties lost their identity because the line between regime and opposition became less apparent (Mihailović, 2001: 68).

Stojanović goes on to outline the positions of the main opposition parties in relation to the national question in the early 1990s, essentially a debate regarding the future of the Yugoslav state and Serbia's position within it. She demonstrates the

¹¹ Stojanović discusses the links between the regime and nationalist intellectuals in Serbia in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and the extent to which this group offered support to Milošević and would later constitute the leadership of the opposition to his regime, after he had effectively adopted their platform. These events are thoroughly examined in Jasna Dragović-Soso's (2002) *Saviours of the Nation: Serbia's Intellectual Opposition and the Revival of Nationalism*. London: Hurst.

¹² Author's translation.

similarity of their positions to those of the Milošević regime, stating that an analysis of programmes of the key opposition parties at this time, reveals that ‘at the time of the breakup of Yugoslavia, the most influential opposition parties in parliament did not publicly propose an alternative national programme which would in any way differ from the words of Slobodan Milošević, “all Serbs in one state”’ (Stojanović, 2000: 466). However, as Stojanović points out, at least for the SPO, this position began to change following the party’s shock defeat in elections in early 1991 in which the SPO had adopted a hard nationalist position. After this, she states, the ‘SPO would begin gradually to move towards the centre’ (Stojanović, 2000: 468). Pribićević also notes this change in SPO stance in the early 1990s when he states that almost all significant opposition parties, with the exception of the SPO after 1992, tried to prove their nationalist credentials¹³ (Pribićević, 1997: 42). Stojanović argues that opposition attacks on the government regarding national issues at this time enabled Milošević to push ‘them out to an extreme political position, by which the potential number of their votes was reduced at the start’ (Stojanović, 2000: 468). Similarly, in relation to the SPO specifically, Gordy notes that ‘Milošević’s party benefited tremendously from SPO’s extremism in 1990’ (Gordy, 1999: 34).

The time period covered by this study begins in 1992, and as such the position of the democratic opposition parties with respect to national issues at the time of the break up of the former Yugoslavia is not of considerable significance. However nationalism continued to be an issue for the democratic opposition parties at various times between 1992 and 2000. In the mid-1990s, both the DS and the Democratic Party of Serbia (DSS – Demokratska Stranka Sribje) took hardline positions with respect to the IC’s proposed solutions for the Bosnian conflict. As both Pribićević and

¹³ Author’s translation

Mihailović point out, this issue resulted in a significant split between the main democratic opposition parties, thereby exacerbating the opposition's weakness in that area also, and showing how opposition weaknesses reinforced one another¹⁴ (Pribičević, 1997: 39; Mihailović, 1997: 56). Gordy notes that the DS's decision to follow a more nationalist course weakened the chance of a strong and united opposition bloc being formed, as it

made extremely unlikely the formation of a proposed "3D" coalition of the three self-described "democratic parties – DS, DEPOS, and DSS – which in coalition with the ethnic minority parties could present a credible opposition to SPS. Instead, opposition parties generally continued their infighting and failed to take advantage of the weakness demonstrated by SPS (Gordy, 1999: 50).

Furthermore, the dominance of national issues in Serbia's political life was still evident in the 1993 elections in which according to Sekelj the opposition failed to capitalise on the dire economic situation in Serbia at the time. He points out that in spite of 'a situation of absolute international isolation... with inflation running at several billion % a year, absolute poverty and impoverishment, both the SPS and the so-called democratic opposition conducted election campaigns dominated by the Serbian national question' (Sekelj, 2000: 65). The failure of the democratic opposition to ensure that Serbia's dire economic situation and the regime's responsibility for these circumstances became a significant electoral issue represents a failure to guard a zone of ideological autonomy against the regime, and is a significant demonstration of the ability of the Milošević regime to control the political agenda within Serbia. What is at issue here, however, and what will be addressed in this study, is the extent to

¹⁴ Author's translation

which international policy in relation to Serbia, which was also dominated by issues relating to Serbian nationalism and war, helped Milošević in his efforts to ensure nationalism remained at the top of the political agenda in Serbia, and thereby contributed to undermining the effectiveness of the democratic opposition parties.

The consequences of the opposition parties' nationalism in terms of its effectiveness in opposing the Milošević regime are more complex and difficult to determine than are the comparatively straightforward consequences of its disunity. It is certainly the case that, insofar as differences between the parties with respect to the national question led to serious rifts within the democratic opposition, opposition nationalism indirectly undermined the ability of the parties to form a credible alternative to the Milošević regime. However, Sekelj argues that opposition nationalism was also, at least in part, directly responsible for the fact that the opposition did not present a credible alternative to the regime, claiming that the inability of the opposition to create an alternative programme was 'primarily because the opposition tried to beat Milošević on the national card, but without having an alternative national programme' (Sekelj, 2000: 61). Furthermore, as has been noted, opposition nationalism diminished the ability of the Serbian opposition to present itself as a credible international partner to the Milošević regime, making international support for its campaigns against Milošević more difficult to attain. What is at issue here is the extent to which international policy contributed to the shortcomings of the democratic opposition parties in this regard.

Lack of a Credible Alternative

A further weakness of the democratic opposition parties that is mentioned by a number of authors is that it did not present a credible alternative programme to that offered by the regime (Pribičević, 1997: 40; Sekelj, 2000: 61). This, according to Stepan, is another one of the central tasks of a democratic opposition in an authoritarian state. While it has already been noted that, at times, opposition nationalism undermined its ability to present a credible alternative to the Milošević regime, the opposition has also been criticised for having no policies or programmes to speak of other than opposing Milošević. According to Stojanović, from the early 1990s:

the nationalist opposition parties abandoned every policy, principle, programme and idea, and that the main focus of their political activity became Slobodan Milošević. In time they would speak less about Serbdom, war, borders, Serbs, democracy, economic trade or any other question of principle, and more about Milošević and his activity. Their principle attitude became “be against, even when this requires a change in party policy, a split in the party, or compromise with the extreme war positions directed from Pale” (Stojanović, 2000: 469).

Ilić makes a similar point, implying that through its focus on Milošević, the opposition was neglecting attempts to construct a viable political programme: ‘The concept of the political enemy is especially important in interpreting the opposition party scene in contemporary Serbia in view of their extremely sketchy visions of a desirable society’ (Ilić, 2000: 15).

Ilić also criticises the opposition on the grounds of its ‘competence and political ability’ which he believes does not get the attention it deserves in evaluations

of the opposition (Ilić, 2000: 19). Ilić discusses in detail the promise that Djindjić made to resign if Milošević was still in power by the beginning of 2000, and the manner in which he evaded having to fulfil this promise. Although Ilić is critical of Djindjić and his lack of 'political responsibility', he qualifies this to a certain extent by noting that these events must be understood 'in the context of the nightmare of Serbian politics in the past decade' (Ilić, 2000: 21).

Similar criticisms of the opposition which broadly relate to its lack of competence and responsibility are also made by Goati. Goati claims that the opposition was 'irresponsible' and that it made unrealistic promises, giving the example of the 1993 elections when the opposition 'promised a spectacular improvement in the catastrophic economic situation in the country if they came to power. They predicted an average wage increase of 1,000 DEM from the current 20 DEM' (Goati, 1998: 28). In a similar vein, Pribićević is critical of the frequent changes of positions on the part of the Serbian opposition¹⁵ (Pribićević, 1997: 46). As such, the fragmentation of the opposition, its lack of coherent and consistent policies, together with incompetence and lack of political responsibility all contributed to the opposition's failure to fulfil the task of presenting a credible democratic alternative to the Milošević regime.

In summary, the weaknesses that characterised Serbia's democratic opposition parties undermined its ability to perform three of the five tasks that have been identified as important for democratic opposition parties in a competitive authoritarian regime such as that of Milošević's Serbia: resisting integration into the regime, guarding zones of ideological autonomy and presenting a credible democratic alternative to that regime both domestically and internationally. However, considering

¹⁵ Author's translation

the weaknesses of the democratic opposition does not reveal anything significant in terms of whether the democratic opposition successfully accomplished the linked tasks of disputing the regime's legitimacy and raising the costs of authoritarian rule, though this should be discernable through an examination of their activities and campaigns against the regime throughout the 1990s.

The aim of this research is to examine the impact of IC policy on the effectiveness of Serbia's democratic opposition parties in their campaigns against the Milošević regime. To operate effectively, democratic opposition must carry out the tasks identified as being important, while acting to overcome the weaknesses that hinder its ability to operate effectively. As such, consideration of these issues provides a useful framework by which to evaluate the Serbian opposition's campaigns and activities. In the context of this research, what is being sought is evidence that the IC either facilitated or hindered the democratic opposition parties in carrying out the tasks and whether international policy may have exacerbated the weaknesses that were present in the democratic opposition, or helped the opposition parties to overcome them.

Research themes

This research will centre around three main themes: the extent to which the democratic opposition parties held different views to the Milošević regime on the issues that were of key importance to the IC; the nature of the relationship between the democratic opposition parties and the IC; and the impact of international policy on the democratic opposition parties' effectiveness in challenging the regime. While the precise details of what will be involved in addressing these questions will be fully

discussed in chapter 2, this chapter will conclude with a brief discussion of each of these themes and how they are intended to highlight particular aspects of the relationship between the democratic opposition parties and the IC during the Milošević era.

Differences between the democratic opposition parties and the Milošević regime

The first point to establish is whether or not the democratic opposition parties held positions on the issues that were of key importance to the IC that were different to those of the Milošević regime. This question is of great importance for two main reasons. Firstly, in its dealings with Serbia throughout the 1990s the IC and its representatives continually sought, thorough coercive policies, to induce a change in behaviour on the part of the Milošević regime. Analysing the motives of the IC in this regard is not the purpose of this study. However, even without a detailed analysis of the motives of the international actors involved, it can be assumed that if the IC was prepared to take such strong measures against the regime - whether through sanctions or the use of military force - that it considered Serbia's compliance with its demands to be of some importance. As such, only if the democratic opposition parties held positions that were different to those of the Milošević regime, and closer to those of the IC than the Milošević regime, could there have been any incentive on the part of the IC to deal with or assist the Serbian opposition. If the opposition parties did hold positions that were different to those of the regime on these key issues, and if those positions were closer to those of the IC than were the positions of the Milošević regime, then those parties can be considered to have been a credible alternative partner for the IC. As such, the IC, at least theoretically, could have chosen from

options other than coercion in an attempt to achieve its goal of behaviour modification. If the democratic opposition represented a credible alternative to the Milošević regime, the IC could have pursued a policy of strengthening the opposition in the hope that this would lead to regime change in Serbia; or it could have combined coercion with a programme of support for the opposition. However, as will be seen, for much, though not all, of the time period considered in this study, the main approach of the IC was to coerce the Serbian authorities in the hope that this would induce the changes that were sought.

As will be shown, for much of the time period considered here, the most important issues for the IC in its dealings with Serbia were the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia and Serbia's role in those conflicts. As such, the issues that were of key concern to the IC related directly to the Serbian national question. Much of the literature dealing with the Serbian opposition argues that in relation to the Serbian national question the democratic opposition parties differed little from the Milošević regime and offered essentially the same national programme (for example, Stojanović, 2000; Mihailović, 1997; Sekelj, 2000). The apparent lack of distinction between the Milošević regime and the democratic opposition parties was also regularly noted in the media. This perception that there was no real difference between the democratic opposition and the Milošević regime on these issues is the second reason why it is important to consider this issue. Although much commentary dealing with the Serbian opposition parties, and particularly media commentary, asserts that there were no real differences between the two, this has not been subject to detailed analysis.

As will be demonstrated in this study, there were significant, if sometimes subtle, differences between the positions of the Milošević regime and the positions of the democratic opposition on many of the issues that were of key concern to the IC,

and it is believed that there are two main reasons why some studies of the Serbian opposition indicate otherwise. Firstly, many of those who criticise the opposition on these grounds include the SRS as part of the opposition in their analyses (Stojanović, 2000; Pribićević, 1997). While the SRS did, at times, operate in opposition to the Milošević regime, more often than not it acted in support of it. This support for the regime has taken the form of informal parliamentary support in the early 1990s, joint participation in electoral coalitions in the latter half of the 1990s, and participation in government, also in the late 1990s. Furthermore, although the SRS did at times oppose the Milošević regime, within the context of this study its policies preclude it from being considered as part of the democratic opposition, and this will be discussed more fully in chapter 2. As will be seen later in this thesis, when the democratic opposition parties are considered separately from the SRS, it becomes clear that there were differences between the democratic opposition parties and the Milošević regime on the issues that were of key importance to the IC.

A further point worth noting in relation to criticism of the Serbian opposition on the grounds of its similarity to the Milošević regime is that often these criticisms relate to particular points in time, or the positions of the opposition parties on specific events. Thus, for example, criticism of the DS on the grounds of its alleged nationalism usually cite the support given by this party, and in particular Zoran Djindjić, to the Bosnian Serb leadership following the decision of Milošević to withdraw his support (Pribićević, 1997: 43). Similarly, criticism of the SPO on the grounds of its alleged nationalism often includes references to the party's positions and those of its leader in the early 1990s (Pribićević, 1997; Stojanović, 2000). While these criticisms may be valid with respect to those particular instances, they do not

reflect the reality of the differences between Milošević and the democratic opposition parties when considered over the entire time period that is covered in this research.

The relationship between the Serbian democratic opposition parties and the international community

The second theme in this research concerns the relationship that existed between the opposition parties and the IC, and the intention here is to get as full a picture of possible regarding the nature and extent of that relationship. As such, what will be considered will not just be whether there were any contacts or links between the democratic opposition parties and the IC, but also whether the IC offered support to the democratic opposition parties in any of its campaigns against the Milošević regime, and if so, the extent of that support. In addition, the perceptions that the IC and the democratic opposition parties held about each other will also be examined.

Clearly the first point that needs to be addressed regarding the relationship between the democratic opposition parties and the IC is whether any such relationship existed. As such, the first consideration is whether there were any contacts or meetings taking place between representatives of the IC and the democratic opposition, and if there were these formal contacts, at what level did they occur. In spite of the IC's coercion of Serbia, IC representatives continued to meet with representatives of the Serbian and Yugoslav authorities at least until the end of the 1990s. As such, it seems that the IC's attention and focus in terms of achieving its goals with respect to Serbia remained firmly fixed on Milošević and his associates, at least until 1999. This is hardly surprising. Traditionally, the focus of international

interactions has been the governments or leaders of individual states, with interference in the internal affairs of any state being proscribed.

However, as noted above, coercion can operate in one of two ways: directly - through causing the target regime to assess that the costs of compliance are less than the costs of continued defiance – or indirectly - through bringing about a change in the internal politics of the target state leading to regime change. While the principle of non-interference in the domestic affairs of states may have carried some weight throughout much of the Cold War era, although it did not preclude covert attempts by states to alter the internal politics of other states, recent experiences indicate that this principle has been eroding. This is most evident in terms of ‘humanitarian intervention’ where states now claim the right to intervene in the affairs of other states, including with military force, if the governments of those states are subjecting their populations to human rights abuses. However, it is also the case that states have actively attempted to influence the internal politics of numerous states with the intention of bringing about regime change. This has been done successfully through providing support to opponents of incumbent regimes in countries such as Georgia, Ukraine, and, as will be seen, Serbia in 2000, and also through the use of force as has been the case in Iraq and Afghanistan.

In the context of this study, and with regard to the relationship between the IC and the democratic opposition parties in Milošević’s Serbia, it appears as though the IC changed its basic goals – from accepting a Milošević regime that would concede to its demands for much of the 1990s to actively calling for the removal of that regime from 1999 on. However, what is being examined here is whether there is any evidence that, prior to 1999, the IC was offering support to the Serbian opposition - rather than focusing exclusively on the Milošević regime – as this will provide a complete picture

of the extent of international support for the democratic opposition throughout the time period covered by this research.

The easiest way to gauge the extent of international support for the democratic opposition is to focus on whether international support was offered to the numerous campaigns that the opposition parties mounted against the regime. These included election campaigns; mass demonstrations calling for Milošević's resignation and democratic reforms; and frequent demands for changes in electoral conditions and the media. In considering international support it is important to recognise that not all support will be explicit, and as such there may have been implied or implicit support for some of the opposition's demands. Clearly explicit support will be easily recognised; it will be evident from IC statements and actions that it supported the opposition's demands or campaigns. While implicit support will be slightly less obvious, it should nevertheless, be possible to discern. If, for example, an IC representative were to issue a statement on Serbia that included references to the undemocratic nature of the Serbia's electoral laws at the same time as the opposition was engaged in a campaign that aimed to have electoral laws changed, this could be taken as an indication of implied support from the IC, even if the democratic opposition and its campaign were not mentioned directly. A final consideration when gauging international support for the opposition relates to the level of that support; there is a clear difference between a vague statement indicating displeasure with the regime on an issue of relevance to the democratic opposition and threatening the regime with coercive measures should it not concede to the opposition's demands. With these considerations in mind, it should be possible to create a clear picture of the extent and nature of international support for the Serbian opposition throughout the time period covered in this study.

The impact of international policy on the democratic opposition

As has already been discussed, the issue of whether and how the IC's actions had an impact on the democratic opposition parties is at the centre of this study, and the aim is to determine whether international policy may have undermined or enhanced the effectiveness of the opposition in its battles against the Milošević regime. The failure of the opposition to defeat the Milošević regime, in spite of its increasing unpopularity in Serbia, most certainly resulted from a combination of internal and external factors. A significant reason for its failures undoubtedly lies in its own weaknesses and shortcomings, but what is being considered in this study is whether the IC, through its actions and policies with respect to Serbia, exacerbated these weaknesses or made it more difficult for the opposition to operate. International actions may have had a direct impact on the democratic opposition, or that impact may have been indirect, through narrowing the political space in which the opposition operated for example.

As noted above, effective opposition to the Milošević regime would require both overcoming the weaknesses that characterised the democratic opposition and carrying out the tasks identified above in order to weaken the regime. As such, in considering the impact of international policy on the effectiveness of the democratic opposition parties, analysis will centre on whether international policy with respect to Serbia acted to undermine or exacerbate the weaknesses of the democratic opposition parties and whether it hindered the ability of the democratic opposition parties to carry out the tasks of resisting integration into the regime; guarding zones of ideological autonomy; disputing the legitimacy of the regime and raising the costs of

authoritarian rule; and presenting a credible alternative to the Milošević regime both internally and internationally.

Conclusion

The aim of this research is to provide a detailed analysis of the relationship between Serbia's democratic opposition parties and the IC throughout the time period in which Serbia was subjected to international coercion. The impact of coercive policies on the effectiveness of democratic opposition parties in the target state is not fully understood, in spite of the potential significance of these actors. As will be set out in chapter 2, Serbia's experience of international coercion varied over time, and the entire time period considered in this study can be broken down into five sub-periods, in each of which Serbia's experience of international isolation differed in its nature and/or extent. Each of these five sub-periods will be considered as a distinct case study in this study, and the relationship between the Serbia's opposition and the IC will be analysed in each of these time periods in order to determine the nature of that relationship and its impact on the operations of the democratic opposition. This will provide a full picture of the interactions between the democratic opposition parties and the IC, and their impact, throughout the entire time period in which Serbia was subject to international isolation. In addition, because of the variety of coercive policies to which Serbia was subjected it will be possible to compare the impacts of different coercive approaches which may help to shed light on the likely impact of such policies on domestic opposition groups. While the findings of this research relate solely to Serbia, it should, nevertheless, be possible to draw some tentative conclusions that could be tested in relation to other states subject to international coercion.

Chapter 2: Methodology

As outlined in chapter 1, the primary focus of this research is to consider the impact of coercive policies employed by the IC in its dealings with Serbia between 1992 and 2000 on the democratic opposition to the Milošević regime. This research will take the form of a case study, using Alexander George's method of structured, focused comparison (George, 1979). This chapter will begin with a brief note on what is meant by the term 'international community' within the context of this research, in addition to identifying which political parties have been selected for inclusion as part of the democratic opposition in Serbia, and an explanation of why these parties have been selected. Following this there will be a discussion of the reasons for choosing a case study approach. In addition, the requirements of George's methodology of structured, focused comparison and its application to this study will also be outlined. This chapter will conclude with a discussion of the research questions that form the basis of this study.

Terminology

This research considers how the international community's policies impacted on democratic opposition parties in Serbia, and as such it is important to clarify what is meant by the term 'international community' in the context of this research and also which parties are being referred to when discussing the democratic opposition in Serbia. While the term 'international community' is open to different meanings, in the context of this research the term is used quite simply as a form of shorthand to denote the

international institutions and individual states that played key roles in subjecting Serbia to international isolation and coercion. In the case of Milošević's Serbia, the states and international institutions that had the most influence differed over time, as will be seen in the detail of this thesis. However, referring to the time period from 1992 to 2000 as a whole, the most significant states and international institutions that were involved in the international response to events in Serbia and the former-Yugoslavia as a whole, included the US; the European Community (EC)/European Union (EU) and its member states, in particular the UK, France and Germany; Russia; the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE); the UN Security Council; the Contact Group (comprising France, Germany, the UK, Russia, the US and Italy); and NATO. While at times the states involved acted collectively, at other times they held different and even contradictory positions. This was the case, for example in the international debate regarding the possible use of force in Bosnia – which was supported, at times, by the US, but opposed by key EU member states such as the UK and France. In spite of these differences however, it is still useful to think of IC engagement with Serbia because generally priority was given to maintaining international unity over formulating effective responses to the crisis in the former Yugoslavia. As a result, the IC at times adopted 'lowest common denominator' policies that ensured that relations between the Western powers would not be damaged as a result of the various conflicts that were taking place in the Balkans. As such, and as will be discussed later in this study, although the policies pursued may not have been adequate in terms of successfully resolving the former Yugoslavia's conflicts, they did, nevertheless, generally represent an 'international', as opposed to unilateral, response. Thus, in 1993, while the US may have favoured a 'lift

and strike' policy in Bosnia, while the EC states were more inclined to support the proposed Vance-Owen peace plan which was unpopular with the Americans, the unwillingness to cause a transatlantic rift resulted in the abandonment of both, and the creation of the so-called 'safe areas' in Bosnia.

Selection of Political Parties

Throughout the 1990s, a large number of political parties operated in opposition to the Milošević regime. However, only four will be considered in this study and these have been selected on the basis of four criteria: that the party must have had a national platform and operated throughout Serbia throughout the time period considered here; that the party must have operated in opposition to the Milošević regime throughout the time period considered here; that the party must have been predominantly democratically oriented; and that it must have been sufficiently large to be considered as a significant party. While these criteria constitute the guidelines for selecting parties to be included here, it must be noted that there are no parties that can be considered to have met all these criteria throughout the entire time period under consideration. As such it is necessary to examine Serbia's opposition to identify which parties can be considered to have come closest to this ideal democratic opposition party. Drawing to a large extent on the work of a number of Serbian social scientists four parties have been identified for inclusion in this study (Goati; 1997; Milošević, 2000; Vukomanović, 1998; Antić, 2002). These are the SPO, the DS, the DSS and the GSS (Civic Alliance of Serbia – Gradjanski Savez Srbije).

Vladimir Goati, one of Serbia's leading political scientists, has written extensively on the Serbia's political parties and party system and this work is useful as an aid to identifying potential parties to be considered in this study. Goati argues that in spite of the large number of political parties operating in Serbia during the Milošević era, there are only five that could have been characterised as 'relevant,' which he defines as having received at least 4% of the vote in parliamentary elections. These are the SPS (Socialist Party of Serbia - Socialistička Partija Srbije), the SPO, the DS, the DSS, and the SRS (Serbian Radical Party - Srpska Radikalna Stranka) (Goati, 1998: 19; Milošević, 2000: 83). While Goati provides a sound basis for eliminating a large number of small and insignificant political parties his criteria for judging the relevance of the various political parties in Serbia are not synonymous with the criteria for selecting parties to be included in this research and as such it is necessary to look at these five parties individually to determine which of them can be considered to be parties of the democratic opposition.

Of the five parties identified by Goati, the case of Milošević's SPS is the most straightforward. As this study focuses on the parties that opposed the Milošević regime, the SPS can clearly be immediately eliminated from the analysis. However, deciding which of the other parties to include requires careful consideration, particularly as the manner in which these parties have operated, the issues that they have prioritised, and their status as opposition parties have not been consistent over time.

Different authors classify the various political parties in different ways which can be useful in trying to ascertain their suitability for inclusion in this study. Vukomanović divides the various political opposition parties into three groups: nationalists, democrats and reformers (Vukomanović, 1998: 36). She includes both the SPO and the SRS among

the nationalists, while the DS and the DSS are included with the democrats. Similarly, Antić argues that the political elite in Serbia throughout most of the time period covered by this research can be divided into three components: the statist, the national-populist and the liberal. According to Antić, the SRS formed part of the national-populist bloc, while the DS, DSS and SPO were situated primarily in the liberal bloc¹ (Antić, 2002: 363).

The inclusion of the DS and the DSS in both the democratic bloc in Vukomanović's scheme and the liberal bloc in Antić's indicates that, at least in terms of their political orientation, these two parties would be suitable for inclusion in this study. Although both parties have, at least at times, promoted a nationalist agenda (as have most major political parties in Serbia), neither Antić nor Vukomanović have included them among the more extreme nationalist parties, indicating that over time this has not been the most significant feature of their political orientation. In addition to their generally democratic orientation both the DS and the DSS have acted primarily as opponents of the Milošević regime throughout the time period covered by this research. Although the DS leader Zoran Djindjić did appear willing on several occasions to enter into agreements with Milošević, this never occurred, and the DS was a major participant in most of the significant anti-regime opposition coalitions that were formed throughout the time period considered in this research. Taken together, these factors warrant the inclusion of both the DS and the DSS as parties of the democratic opposition within the context of this research.

During the 1990s the SRS was, at various times, both fiercely critical of the Milošević regime and a coalition partner with the SPS in government. In the early 1990s,

¹ Author's translation

the SRS, though not formally a member of the government, nevertheless provided important parliamentary support for the SPS. Furthermore, according to Gordy, the SRS leader Vojislav Šešelj was at this time one of a series of 'ideological surrogates' used by Milošević to express extreme nationalist or other opinions, which he could later distance himself from should the need arise (Gordy, 1999: 17). Gordy also draws attention to the role of Šešelj and the SRS as a 'counteropposition', stating that 'Šešelj came to be closely associated with the regime, emerging as a "counteropposition" attacking anti-war forces with a vehemence that the ruling party saw as beneath its own dignity' (Gordy, 1999: 46). This period of co-operation came to an end however, when Milošević decided to support the Vance-Owen peace plan for Bosnia. A period of hostility between the Milošević and the SRS followed, with the SRS continuing to back the Bosnian Serb leadership which had rejected the peace plan. This period of hostility saw the SRS achieve great success in the 1996 elections, following which the party became 'the strongest individual Serbian opposition party' (Vukomanović, 1998: 37). However, following elections at the end of 1997 the SPS found itself in need of a coalition partner in order to form a government, and in 1998 the SRS became part of a Serbian coalition government headed by the SPS (Milošević, 2000: 103). This pattern of co-operation with, and opposition to, the regime makes it difficult to classify the SRS in terms of whether it can be considered an opposition party in this study. While clearly opposed to Milošević during the mid-1990s, the SRS offered both tacit and explicit support to the regime at different times during the time period covered by this research. However, even during the mid-1990s when the SRS operated as an opposition party, there was little co-operation between it and other opposition parties, and the SRS did not participate in any of the significant alliances and

coalitions that were formed by the democratic opposition parties during this time. Nevertheless, a willingness to co-operate with the regime or a lack of willingness to co-operate with other opposition parties are not the only determinants of which parties should be included in this study.

In terms of its political orientation Antonić places the SRS in the national-populist wing of the political elite in Serbia, while Vukomanović places it among the nationalist parties. Šešelj and the SRS have been the most prominent promoters of 'Greater Serbian' nationalism throughout the time period covered by this research. The Programme Declaration of the SRS adopted in February 1991 counts among the fundamental goals of the party the restoration of an independent Serb state that would include:

all Serb lands, which means that within its boundaries it shall have, in addition to the present granted Serbian federal unit, the Serb Macedonia, the Serb Montenegro, the Serb Bosnia, the Serb Herzegovina, the Serb Dubrovnik, the Serb Dalmatia, the Serb Lika, the Serb Kordun, the Serb Banija, the Serb Slavonia, and the Serb Baranja (Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia, 1997: 160).

The same declaration also outlines a series of measures for dealing with insurgence in Kosovo, including the immediate expulsion of 360,000 Albanian 'emigrants' and the postponement of any elections in Kosovo until the 'ethnic structure of the population is restored to the ratio which existed on 6 April 1941' (The Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia, 1997: 162-163). Taken together, the extremism of the SRS and its willingness to provide both tacit and explicit support to the Milošević regime, are

sufficient grounds for its exclusion as a party of the democratic opposition in Serbia within the context of this study.

The case for the SPO is also quite complex. Although opposing the regime for a considerable period of time, the SPO and its leader Vuk Drašković showed a willingness on several occasions to co-operate with the Milošević regime and even went as far as to join the federal government in early 1999. As such the SPO does not have an unblemished record in terms of its opposition to the Milošević regime. Furthermore, from 1997 the SPO also controlled Belgrade's city government with tacit support from the SPS. Nevertheless, this alone is not sufficient grounds to exclude the SPO as, throughout much of the time period covered, the party was active in its opposition to the regime and played a leading role in several of the most significant opposition coalitions that were established in Serbia during the time of Milošević's rule. Furthermore, Drašković was one of the principal organisers of anti-Milošević demonstrations in Serbia from 1991 onwards. As Vukomanović points out, in spite of its nationalist orientation the SPO 'positioned itself as a primarily anti-regime, anti-system party' (Vukomanović, 1998: 36). Furthermore, throughout most of the time period covered here, the SPO was also the largest and most popular individual opposition party operating in Serbia.

As noted, Vukomanović places the SPO in the nationalist group of parties while Antić classifies it, with some reservations, as a liberal party. Although it is certainly the case that the SPO, particularly in its early stages, did present a nationalist ideology, this alone cannot be considered grounds for its exclusion as, to a greater or lesser extent, most major political parties in Serbia during the 1990s could be considered to be nationalist. Furthermore, according to Vukomanović, following his early promotion of

Greater Serbian nationalism, Drašković, 'engaging himself against civil war in Yugoslavia ... induced a complete switch in [the SPO's] policy' (Vukomanović, 1998: 36). On these grounds the SPO can be considered to be a democratic opponent of the Milošević regime for the purposes of this study.

In addition to the three parties that Goati mentions as being relevant, I have decided to include a fourth that does not appear in Goati's list. This is the GSS. Although not considered relevant by Goati on the grounds of its small size and lack of electoral support, the GSS fits the other criteria for inclusion here to a greater extent than any of the other three parties already included. In terms of its classification by Antonić and Vukomanović the GSS is classed as a liberal and reformist party and is generally considered to be the most consistently moderate political party in Serbia, in that it has been a constant opponent of nationalism, war and the Milošević regime. Furthermore, as Vukomanović points out, the GSS, through its prominent participation in major opposition coalitions, gave it an influence that far-exceeded its negligible electoral support (Vukomanović, 1998: 39).

Methodology: Structured, focused comparison

The context dependent nature of this study makes the use of a case study research strategy essential in order to fully address the issues and questions raised within this thesis. While the advantages and suitability of this approach have been discussed in chapter 1, here the limitations of such a strategy will be considered together with the specific methodology to be employed - Alexander George's methodology of structured, focused comparison - and how this can help to overcome these limitations. This will be

followed by a discussion of the nature of the research findings that are likely to result from choosing this approach.

Overcoming the limitations of a case study research strategy

Although a case study research strategy has clear strengths within the context of this research, it is nevertheless true that such a strategy also has certain limitations. Case study based research has many detractors and one of the foremost criticisms of this approach concerns the extent to which generalisations can be made based on the findings of case study research. Yin addresses this question by pointing out that case studies are generalisable to ‘theoretical propositions’ rather than populations and universes, and thus the goal of a case study is to ‘expand and generalise theories (analytic generalisation) and not to enumerate frequencies (statistical generalisation)’ (Yin, 2003: 10). George’s method of structured, focused comparison directly addresses the question of the wider applicability of case study findings and their potential role in the development of theory. Using his method of structured, focused comparison it is possible both to acknowledge and understand the uniqueness of each case, while at the same time making some generalisations on the basis of case study based research findings. He states that:

one can deal with unique cases by treating them as members of a “class” or type of phenomenon that one is interested to understand better ... the many instances of each type can be grouped together and studied as a class of similar events rather than as unique occurrences. By following this research strategy it might be possible to develop scientific generalizations and general laws of at least a

probabilistic character covering all the many instances/cases of each type of phenomena (George, 1979: 45).

In the case of this study, it is therefore possible to consider international coercion as the phenomenon in question, with the range of strategies that were employed by the IC in its dealings with Serbia representing individual examples of this phenomenon.

George points out that not all types of case study are suitable for the purposes of theory development. However, he states that what he describes as the 'heuristic' case study is a suitable variant for this purpose. This type of case study is:

used as a means of stimulating the imagination in order to discern important new general problems, identify possible theoretical solutions, and formulate potentially generalizable relations that were not previously apparent. In other words the case study is regarded as an opportunity to learn more about the complexity of the problem studied, to develop further the existing explanatory framework, and to refine and elaborate the initially available theory employed by the investigator in order to provide an explanation of the particular case examined (George, 1979: 52).

George's description of the heuristic case study has many similarities with Lijphart's 'hypothesis-generating' case study. This is a case study which:

starts out with a more or less vague notion of possible hypotheses, and attempts to formulate definite hypotheses to be tested subsequently among a larger number of cases. Their objective is to develop theoretical generalisations in areas where no theory exists yet. Such case studies are of great theoretical value (Lijphart, 1971: 692).

As noted in chapter one, the impact of international coercion on democratic opposition parties in target states has not been the subject of a great deal of analysis. In the case of Serbia itself, while there has been some consideration of whether international policy may have resulted in undermining the Milošević regime, for example Dragović-Soso's (2003) study of the impact of coercion on the support base and power resources of the regime, the impact on the democratic opposition parties has not been subject to systematic analysis, and as noted in chapter one, undermining the regime does not necessarily imply strengthening the democratic opposition. Given the lack of existing theory in this area the goals of George's heuristic case study and Lijphart's hypothesis-generating case study make them particularly well suited in the context of this study.

Nature of Research Findings

George states that controlled comparison is particularly suited to developing typological theory and what he calls 'rich, differentiated theory' which, 'in contrast to a general explanatory theory, is cast in the form of contingent generalizations and has the capability for more discriminating explanations' (George, 1979: 59). He goes on to state that:

the investigator who employs the controlled comparison strategy seeks to identify the variety of different causal patterns that can occur for the phenomenon in question. He (sic) seeks to identify the conditions under which each distinctive type of causal pattern occurs rather than attempting to address the questions of how often each outcome and/or causal pattern does occur or can be expected to occur. Thus, controlled comparison is useful for developing a

differentiated theory comprised of conditional generalisations rather than frequency distributions' (George, 1979: 60).

In the context of this research, the application of George's method will allow for a comparison of the impact on the democratic opposition parties of a range of coercive policies as employed by international actors between 1992 and 2000. The purpose of such a comparison is to consider whether the different international policies produced different outcomes in terms of the effectiveness of the democratic opposition in Serbia. The context-dependent nature of this research means that any findings will apply only to Serbia during the time period being considered, but it will nevertheless be possible to generate some tentative hypotheses regarding the impact of international coercion on democratic opposition parties operating in coerced states that could subsequently be examined in the context of other 'rogue' states.

In carrying out comparative research a researcher must address certain issues that have the potential to weaken the research findings if not adequately dealt with. Foremost among these is the selection of appropriate and comparable cases. This need for comparability is reflected in George's assertion that the cases to be examined must belong to one particular class of events. Lijphart defines comparable as 'similar in a large number of important characteristics (variables) which one wants to treat as constants, but dissimilar as far as those variables are concerned which one wants to relate to each other' (Lijphart, 1971: 687). For this reason, as Lijphart notes, the consideration of a series of cases from a single country over a period of time, as is the case with this study, offers greater comparability than would be the case if examples were taken from several different countries (Lijphart, 1971: 689).

Applying the methodology

George outlines three phases in any research process involving the structured, focused comparison methodology. These are the design phase, the case studies, and drawing theoretical implications of the case studies. While the case studies themselves will form the bulk of this thesis, and drawing implications from the findings will effectively be its conclusion, it is necessary here to make some points regarding the design phase of this methodology. As has been noted, what is being investigated in this research is the effect that international coercive policies had on the democratic opposition parties in Serbia between 1992 and 2000. This will be evaluated according to how international actions may have either exacerbated or undermined the generally agreed weaknesses that characterised these parties, or hindered or helped the democratic opposition parties in carrying out the four tasks necessary to effectively oppose the regime identified in chapter one. The time period under consideration will be broken down into five sub-periods which are demarcated according to how the nature and/or extent of the international coercion to which Serbia was subjected differed, and each of these individual time periods will constitute a single case study. This division of the overall time period considered in this research into a series of sub-periods is done through applying Geldenhuys' framework for measuring international isolation to Serbia in the 1990s, and this will be discussed in detail in the following section. In addition, the requirements of George's methodology are that each case study considered in any particular study be subjected to the same set of questions in order to facilitate comparison. In the context of this research, this will involve formulating a set of

questions that can evaluate the impact of the IC's coercive policies on the democratic opposition parties in Serbia. These questions will be based around the three research themes discussed at the end of chapter one, and will be outlined in detail later in this chapter, following which there will be a discussion of the data that are to be used in carrying out this research.

Geldenhuis' framework

Geldenhuis devotes a considerable amount of attention to developing a framework for the measurement of international isolation, seeing the degree of any state's international isolation as being a point on a continuum, with no state ever being entirely isolated or entirely integrated (Geldenhuis, 1990: 13). He considers international isolation on a number of different levels, acknowledging that there are differences in terms of the particular areas in which a state can be subject to isolation, in terms of the geographical scope of isolation, in terms of the specific targets of an isolation policy and in terms of the aims and objectives of the isolator states, and as such recognises that states that are subject to policies of enforced isolation each experience this in different ways.

Geldenhuis outlines four areas in which a state can be subjected to enforced isolation: the diplomatic and political; the economic; the military; and the socio-cultural. For each of these four areas he has developed a set of indicators for determining the extent to which any given state is internationally isolated (Geldenhuis, 1990: 17-18). Geldenhuis also acknowledges that there are three possible targets for a policy of enforced isolation: the government of the target state, selected interest groups in that state

or the population of that state (Geldenhuis, 1990: 19-20). He points out that very often the government of the isolated state is the primary, if not the exclusive, target of the isolation policy, but that in some cases other groups can be targeted as well. Geldenhuis also claims that it is possible to understand the objectives of states carrying out the isolation policy by examining whether the isolation is state-, regime-, government-, or policy-directed, although he does acknowledge that these are not neatly separable categories (Geldenhuis, 1990: 22). Considering the case of Serbia's international isolation, throughout most of the time period from 1992-2000, this was policy-directed isolation, defined by Geldenhuis as 'an attempt by foreign states to compel another to change or abandon specific actions they find unacceptable' (Geldenhuis, 1990: 23). However, following the NATO bombing of Kosovo in 1999 and the indictment of Milošević and other senior regime officials, the IC's objectives went beyond attempting to change the behaviour of the Serbian authorities, and international actors pursued a policy of, at a minimum, government-directed isolation, described by Geldenhuis as being 'designed to force a particular government to renounce power' (Geldenhuis, 1990: 23). Geldenhuis himself claims that international objectives went beyond a change of government and constituted a policy of regime-directed isolation, which he states is 'designed to force wholesale or limited change in the norms, values and authority structure of an offending state' (Geldenhuis, 1990: 23). Commenting on the case of Yugoslavia in a later work, Geldenhuis notes that regime change 'refers both to the introduction of a fully democratic political order in [Yugoslavia] and to the change in Kosovo's status' (Geldenhuis, 2004: 268).

Through considering Serbia's international isolation in terms of the areas in which it was isolated, the scope of that isolation and the targets of the IC's isolation policies, it becomes clear that this isolation varied in both its nature and its extent. When this is supplemented by considering other measures that the IC used to coerce Serbia it is possible to break down the entire time period from 1992 to 2000 into five sub-periods, each of which will constitute a distinct case study in this research, although it must be acknowledged that these time periods did in practice overlap to a certain extent.

Geldenhuis' framework and Serbia from 1992-2000

Before considering the specific measures that the IC implemented to isolate Serbia internationally, it is necessary to consider some aspects of Serbia's diplomatic and political isolation that apply throughout the entire time period being considered here. Some of these are not discernible through considering specific sanctions, while others predate the initial imposition of sanctions. Geldenhuis lists seven indicators of political and diplomatic isolation: pariah image; international recognition of the isolated state and/or its government; diplomatic relations; membership of intergovernmental organisations and participation in international conferences; international treaties; official visits abroad by government/state representatives and visits of foreign counterparts to the state; and international censure and support in intergovernmental organisations (Geldenhuis, 1990: 17). Considering Serbia's experience in relation to these indicators, it can be demonstrated that even before the imposition of formal sanctions, Serbia was already subject to a degree of international isolation.

Geldenhuis distinguishes political isolation from diplomatic isolation, with the latter being a lack of bilateral and multilateral interactions between governments, while the former is more concerned with the 'image' of a particular state, and whether or not it has acquired a 'pariah image'. For Geldenhuis, the issue of whether or not a state has a pariah image centres on 'the general images that foreigners (governments and public) have' of the ostracised state (Geldenhuis, 1990: 91), and he describes a pariah image as 'a popular international notion that [a state] is a deviant whose behaviour offends international conscience, or whose very claims to statehood have little or no validity in this day and age (Geldenhuis, 1990: 665).²

There is considerable evidence to support the conclusion that Serbia did indeed acquire a 'pariah image'. Serbia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SRJ – Savezna Republika Jugoslavije) were identified by numerous international actors of being the primary instigators of conflict in the former-Yugoslavia.³ While Serbia's image problems were probably alleviated slightly during the mid-1990s, with Milošević's acceptance of the Dayton Peace agreement and his role in bringing about this settlement, Serbia was never entirely rehabilitated, and its image problems intensified at the end of the 1990s as a result of its actions in Kosovo and Milošević's indictment for war crimes.

² Of all the indicators of international isolation that are included in his framework, Geldenhuis claims that all but two are quantifiable. Those that are not are the first two indicators of diplomatic and political isolation: pariah image and international recognition of the isolated state and/or its government (Geldenhuis, 1990: 90).

³ For example, UN General Assembly Resolution 47/121 identified the SRJ as the primary culprit in the Bosnian conflict and noted the 'existence in Serbian and Montenegrin controlled areas of concentration camps and detention centres, in pursuit of the abhorrent policy of "ethnic cleansing", which is a form of genocide'. Similarly, Human Rights Watch World Report 1992 identified the federal military and the Serbian government as being responsible for most of the gross abuses of human rights then taking place throughout the former Yugoslavia, and also noted that Serb insurgents in Croatia were acting 'with the support of Serbian President Slobodan Milošević's government'. In the same report, HRW also condemns the Serbian authorities for internal human rights abuses, pointing out that the Serbian government had, in 1991, used 'repressive methods against peaceful demonstrators in Belgrade on March 9 and 10', and criticised an official report into these events as being neither objective nor free of government control.

In addition to acquiring a pariah image, the SRJ at its inception, also had problems in the area of international recognition, another of the indicators of diplomatic and political isolation identified by Geldenhuys, who notes that the denial of recognition of statehood represents 'the severest form of isolation to which an entity claiming statehood can be subjected' (Geldenhuys, 1990: 142). At its inception, the SRJ claimed to be the sole successor state of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRJ - Socijalistička Federativna Republika Jugoslavija) and the inheritor of the rights and obligations of the former state, including its membership of the UN. The IC rejected this claim, however, and as such the external legitimacy of the new state was questioned from the outset.⁴ Furthermore, in September 1992 the UN Security Council passed Resolution 777 which formally denied the SRJ the right to continue to occupy the seat of the SFRJ in the UN, recommending to the General Assembly that the SRJ should not be allowed to participate in its work⁵. In response, at its meeting on 22 September the General Assembly voted to expel the SRJ.⁶ Security Council Resolution 821 of 28 April 1993 reaffirmed the Security Council's decision of Resolution 777 and recommended that the SRJ should not participate in the UN's Economic and Social Council. In spite of the UN's non-recognition of the SRJ, however, Yugoslav diplomats maintained a presence at the UN, offsetting to a certain degree, the SRJ's lack of membership. However, in 2000, Richard Holbrooke, at the time the US ambassador to the UN, began a campaign to have these diplomats expelled.⁷ The SRJ did not become a member of the UN until after

⁴ Evidence of the SRJ's diplomatic isolation can be seen from the fact that its proclamation ceremony was boycotted by the majority of Western states, including the US, eleven of the twelve members of the EC (the exception being Greece which sent a low level delegation), Canada, Australia, Japan, the Scandinavian countries, and Austria, among others (United Press International, 27 April 1992).

⁵ UN Security Council Resolution 777, 19 September 1992.

⁶ Tanjug, 23 September 1992 in BBC Summary of World Broadcasts EE/1494/C/1, 24 September 1992.

⁷ International Herald Tribune, 15 August 2000.

Milošević had been deposed, and as such, throughout the time period considered here, the SRJ remained isolated according to this particular indicator.⁸ Furthermore, the SRJ was suspended from the CSCE in July 1992, with only Russia's support preventing its expulsion, and was also prevented from participating in international financial institutions for most of the time period covered by this research.

Nevertheless, while the SRJ was denied a degree of external legitimacy as a result of its lack of UN membership, Geldenhuys draws attention to the fact that it is possible for the government of a state that is not formally recognised internationally to be engaged in international interactions that imply recognition (Geldenhuys, 1990: 126). A major indicator of implied international recognition is formal diplomatic relations (Geldenhuys, 1990: 136). According to Geldenhuys, it would be expected that a state subject to enforced international isolation would be 'forced by adverse external political circumstances to maintain diplomatic ties on a (numerical) level well below that which it desires or has the physical capacity to maintain' (Geldenhuys, 1990: 144).

The impact of the break up of the SFRJ on the Yugoslav foreign service combined with the imposition of UN sanctions that called on all states to 'reduce the level of the staff at diplomatic missions and consular posts'⁹ of the SRJ, caused significant disruption in the SRJ's diplomatic relations. Furthermore, these diplomatic relations had been disrupted even before the Security Council passed Resolution 757, when EC member

⁸ While the SRJ's statehood was, to some extent, undermined by its exclusion from the UN, it should be noted that the right of Serbia and Montenegro to form a new joint state was not in question; rather the issue was one of continuity of the old state. For example, a US State Department spokesperson expressed America's 'readiness to discuss with Serbia and Montenegro their plans to have a common state' (US State Department Regular Briefing, 27 April 1992). This contrasts with more extreme cases of non-recognition of statehood identified by Geldenhuys, such as that of the Republic of China/Taiwan following admission of the Peoples Republic of China to the UN in the 1970s, and Israel, the very existence of which was questioned by most of its Arab neighbours.

⁹ UN Security Council Resolution 757, 30 May 1992.

states and the US recalled their ambassadors from Belgrade. However, although its diplomatic relations were certainly curtailed, the SRJ did maintain diplomatic contacts with a large number of countries, though at a lower level than had been the case earlier. As Mitić points out, while a great many countries recalled their ambassadors from Yugoslavia after the imposition of UN sanctions, most states did not insist on a reduction of staff levels in consular posts (Mitić, 1998: 2).¹⁰ In addition to the formal diplomatic relations that were maintained even after sanctions were introduced, until mid-1999 the Serbian authorities continued to receive visits from representatives of foreign governments and also made official visits abroad. Serbia also participated in numerous international conferences that dealt with the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia and also signed peace treaties relating to these conflicts. As such, while Serbia was undoubtedly isolated in the diplomatic sphere, this isolation was far from total, and it was only after the Kosovo conflict that most, though not all, contacts between the Serbian authorities and other states, were severed. In the period following the NATO bombing in 1999, visits to Serbia by representatives of other states were extremely rare, as were visits abroad by representatives of the Serbian authorities. Indeed, such visits were made incredibly difficult as key members of the Serbian and Yugoslav governments, and their associates were prohibited from travelling to a large number of other states. Furthermore, Milošević himself and some of his closest associates, as indicted war criminals, risked arrest should they have decided to leave the SRJ. As such, while Serbia was clearly subject to

¹⁰ Mitić also notes that the states which interpreted Resolution 757 in the most radical manner were Malaysia, New Zealand, the US and Canada, with Malaysia and New Zealand ordering the closure of Yugoslav embassies on their territory, and Malaysia imposing a ban on Yugoslav citizens entering the country. Of greater significance, however, was the US reaction. Both the US and Canada, in addition to ordering a reduction of staff at their Yugoslav embassies, also closed down all Yugoslav consulates situated on their territory (Mitić, 1998: 3).

diplomatic and political isolation throughout the entire time period considered in this research, this isolation varied over time, with a significant increase following the NATO bombing of the SRJ in 1999.

The Case Studies

Case Study 1: The Beginning of Isolation: May 1992-September 1994

The starting point of this study is 30 May 1992 when the UN Security Council passed Resolution 757 imposing wide-ranging sanctions against the SRJ. Even before this resolution was passed, however, Serbia was already subject to international isolation in the military sphere as UN Security Council Resolution 751, which was passed on 25 September 1991, imposed an arms embargo against the SFRJ which continued to apply to all its successor states following the dissolution of the joint state. In addition, in November 1991, the EC also applied sanctions against the SFRJ,¹¹ as did Canada¹², Japan¹³ and the US.¹⁴ Measures imposed against the SRJ before Resolution 757 was passed included decisions by the EC¹⁵ and the US¹⁶ to recall diplomats from Belgrade, a

¹¹ These included the suspension of a trade and co-operation agreement with the SFRJ, limits on Yugoslav textile imports, and an end to certain economic assistance to Yugoslavia. Federal News Service, News conference regarding European Community sanctions against Yugoslavia presided by Dutch Foreign Minister Hans Van Den Broek, NATO Summit Conference Rome, Italy, 8 November 1991.

¹² The Associated Press, 8 November 1991.

¹³ United Press International, 12 November 1991.

¹⁴ The Washington Post, 10 November 1991.

¹⁵ United Press International, 12 May 1992.

¹⁶ Department of State Dispatch, 18 May 1992.

US decision to deny landing rights to Yugoslav aircraft,¹⁷ and limited EC trade sanctions against the SRJ.¹⁸

Security Council Resolution 757 banned all exports and imports to and from Yugoslavia, including oil, but exempting food and medicine, and prohibited financial transactions. In addition the Resolution imposed a flight ban and called for the suspension of scientific, technical and cultural cooperation as well as barring the SRJ from participating in international sporting events.¹⁹ These sanctions amounted to a considerable degree of international isolation for Serbia in three of the four areas identified by Geldenhuys. Furthermore, subsequent UN Security Council resolutions focused on strengthening these sanctions and improving their enforcement, thereby increasing Serbia's isolation.

While the impact of Resolution 757 on Serbia's diplomatic relations has already been noted, Resolution 757 also isolated the SRJ in terms of yet another indicator of diplomatic and political isolation: international censure. In his discussion of international censure, Geldenhuys points out that he means more than verbal condemnation, asserting that 'We are particularly interested in international censure that finds expression in collective action aimed at restricting a delinquent state's external relations, while acknowledging that actual ostracist measures are typically preceded or accompanied by verbal castigation' (Geldenhuys, 1990: 237). Resolution 757 is a clear example of international censure according to Geldenhuys' definition.

Resolution 757 also involved a significant degree of economic isolation. In considering economic isolation, Geldenhuys lists eight indicators of economic isolation,

¹⁷ The Financial Times, 23 May 1992.

¹⁸ United Press International, 28 May 1992.

¹⁹ UN Security Council Resolution 757, 30 May 1992.

that he divides into three main groups: those dealing with trade relations, those dealing with foreign investment, loans and technology transfer, and those dealing with foreign aid, though as he notes these groups and the indicators do overlap²⁰ (Geldenhuis, 1990: 282). The enforced international isolation to which the SRJ was subjected during this time period resulted in economic isolation according to all three groups of indicators. The initial sanctions imposed under Resolution 757 banned trade and the provision of financial and economic resources to the SRJ. These sanctions were tightened in Resolution 787 passed on 16 November 1992 which banned the transshipment of crude oil, petroleum products, coal, energy-related equipment and other commodities without the explicit authorisation of the sanctions committee; and in Resolution 820 passed on 17 April 1993, which prohibited transshipment of goods on the Danube without specific authorisation, in addition to freezing SRJ assets abroad.²¹ Alongside the economic and financial sanctions contained in the UN Security Council Resolution, the SRJ was also prevented from assuming the SFRJ's place in the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, compounding the isolation that derived from the Security Council sanctions.

Under the UN sanctions regime, Serbia was also isolated in the socio-cultural sphere. Geldenhuis considers the measurement of international isolation in this sphere to be more difficult than in the other three areas. This, he explains, is due to the fact that 'the term "socio-cultural" embraces a wide range of interactions, from sport and tourism to art and religion. There is consequently a host of possible indicators of socio-cultural isolation' (Geldenhuis, 1990: 536-537). While acknowledging the range of potential

²⁰ The individual indicators of economic isolation are trade, trade agreements, trade representation, trade promotion, investments, loans, the transfer of technology and foreign aid (Geldenhuis, 1990: 282).

²¹ Security Council Resolution 820 also extended sanctions to Serb controlled areas of Croatia and Bosnia.

indicators, Geldenhuys identifies nine which are sorted into three groups, though again he notes that these indicators are 'not neatly separable and some also overlap those used to measure isolation in other spheres' (Geldenhuys, 1990: 537). The three groups include official cultural agreements and membership of international non-governmental organisations; travel and tourism including air and sea links; and sports, art and entertainment, and also education (Geldenhuys, 1990: 537). Considering the UN sanctions that were applied against the SRJ at this time, it is clear that Serbia was also isolated in the socio-cultural sphere, as Resolution 757 included a flight ban, banned Yugoslavia's participation in international sporting events and suspended scientific and technical co-operation and cultural exchanges.

Summing up Serbia's experience at this time, UN sanctions against the SRJ were extensive, curtailing Serbia's international interactions in all four areas identified by Geldenhuys. Furthermore, as these sanctions were imposed by the UN Security Council under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, their geographical scope was almost global. Thus, according to Woodward, 'By the end of May, Serbia was being transformed into a pariah state, isolated by diplomatic, scientific, sports, and economic exchange until the fighting ceased in Bosnia-Herzegovina' (Woodward, 1995: 288). In terms of the stated goals of the IC at this time, the UN Security Council Resolutions that applied and strengthened these sanctions all made reference to events in Bosnia, and as such the imposition of sanctions can be considered to have been intended to compel the Serbian and Yugoslav authorities to refrain from providing assistance to the Bosnian Serb forces there, and as such was policy-directed isolation according to Geldenhuys' definition. However, while the goal of sanctions at this time may have been to influence government policy, there

was no attempt made to target the Milošević regime or select groups of its supporters, and the comprehensive nature of the sanctions impacted heavily on Serbia's population.

Case Study 2: Ending the Bosnian War: January 1993-October 1996

This time period begins in early 1993, when the IC presented the Vance Owen Peace Plan (VOPP) as part of its efforts to bring the conflict in Bosnia to an end. While this was not the first such peace plan devised by the IC, it was the first that was supported by the Serbian authorities who advocated that it be accepted by the Bosnian Serbs. While this effort failed, it nevertheless marks a turning point in that from this time on, Milošević agreed to accept international peace plans and exerted pressure on the Bosnian Serbs to do likewise. In recognition of these efforts the UN Security Council passed Resolution 943 on 23 September 1994 allowing for the temporary suspension of some sanctions. Resolution 943 allowed for the resumption of civilian passenger flights to and from Belgrade and civilian passenger ferry services between Bar and Bari in Italy, together with the resumption of cultural and sports exchanges, thereby reducing Serbia's international isolation in the socio-cultural arena. Following this, on 22 November 1995 the Security Council passed Resolution 1022 suspending all sanctions that had been placed on the SRJ indefinitely, and also praising the SRJ government for its decision 'to attend and participate constructively in proximity talks in the United States of America, and acknowledging with appreciation the efforts made by these Governments to reach a

lasting peace settlement'.²² Finally, Resolution 1074 on 1 October 1996 terminated all sanctions against the SRJ.

As can be seen, this time period was marked by the gradual reintegration of the SRJ. The IC however, kept most sanctions in place until the end of 1995 when the Dayton Peace Agreement was signed, at which point they were suspended. Full revocation of the sanctions had to wait until the end of 1996 following the first post-war elections in Bosnia. Thus while Serbia's isolation was diminishing, the IC kept the most serious sanctions in place to ensure Milošević's continued co-operation with international attempts to resolve the Bosnian conflict, and suspended rather than terminated these sanctions in late 1995. These attempts to ensure compliance through coercion again indicate a policy-directed strategy on the part of the IC, while the scope of Serbia's isolation remained almost universal as the sanctions were imposed by the Security Council.

Case Study 3: Reintegration and the 'outer wall': October 1996-March 1998

This sub-period begins with the termination of UN sanctions against the SRJ and is characterised by a relatively high level of international integration for Serbia. However, Serbia was still subjected to a degree of international isolation through the maintenance of an 'outer wall' of sanctions. These sanctions were maintained primarily by the US, and blocked the SRJ from membership of international organisations such as the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and NATO's Partnership for Peace, in addition to preventing it from joining or having access to lending from international

²² UN Security Council Resolution 1022 (1995), 22 November 1995.

financial institutions such as the IMF, the World Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) (International Crisis Group, 2000: 2). While this involved a level of isolation in the political and diplomatic area as well as the economic area, the extent of Serbia's international isolation was considerably reduced, even in these two areas, as was its geographical scope. The US insisted on maintaining the outer wall of sanctions until the situation in Kosovo improved, and also, following attempts on the part of the Milošević regime to annul local election victories achieved by the opposition, the outer wall was also linked to a need for democratic reform in Serbia. However, the international response to Milošević's attempts at electoral fraud was, as will be seen, rather lukewarm. Although the US threatened the re-imposition of UN sanctions, this did not occur. The EU introduced limited economic sanctions, but these were removed very quickly following Milošević's decision to respect the election victories of the opposition Zajedno coalition. Although there were some verbal criticisms of the Milošević regime for its authoritarian behaviour, this did not constitute international censure according to Geldenhuys' definition as it amounted to little more than verbal castigation. Furthermore, there were no calls for Milošević's resignation from the IC, although this was being demanded by the democratic opposition. As such, sanctions which did remain in place against Serbia, still constituted policy-directed isolation.

Case Study 4: Kosovo, NATO and the ICTY indictment: March 1998-June 1999

The relatively high level of international integration that Serbia enjoyed in the mid-1990s, came to an end in 1998 when the SRJ was subjected to increasing isolation as

a result of the deteriorating security situation in Kosovo. The lead international actor responding to the crisis in Kosovo was the Contact Group which in March 1998 began to subject the SRJ to enforced international isolation. On 9 March 1998, the Contact Group imposed limited sanctions against the SRJ including some trade restrictions, and a visa ban against ten named senior Serbian and Yugoslav officials 'responsible for repressive action by [Yugoslav] security forces in Kosovo.'²³ The Contact Group also called on the UN Security Council to consider an arms embargo against the SRJ, and subsequently, on 31 March 1998, the Security Council passed Resolution 1160, prohibiting the sale or supply of military equipment to the SRJ, including Kosovo.²⁴ While the SRJ was already subject to the EC arms embargo agreed in 1996, Resolution 1160 widened the geographical scope of its isolation in the military sphere.

When initial efforts to pressurise the Serbian authorities did not produce the desired results, the Contact Group introduced further sanctions on 29 April, freezing Yugoslavia's overseas assets, and threatening to ban new investment if progress had not been made in resolving the Kosovo dispute by 9 May.²⁵ When satisfactory progress was not forthcoming, on 9 May at a meeting of G-8 foreign ministers, the UK, the US, Germany, France, Italy and Canada banned new investment in the SRJ and froze Yugoslav assets abroad,²⁶ leaving the country internationally isolated in the economic sphere. In addition, in late June, the EU also decided to ban flights by Yugoslav carriers

²³ RAPID, Commission of the European Communities, 2075th Council meeting Justice and Home Affairs, Brussels, 19 March 1998.

²⁴ Weller points out that the arms embargo 'did not really represent significant action on the part of the Council. By 1998 Belgrade had rearmed, under a formal cooperation agreement with Russia' and had a 'significant indigenous arms industry, at least in relation to the less sophisticated weapons systems which were of relevance to the fighting in Kosovo' (Weller, 1999: 187).

²⁵ Contact Group statement on Kosovo, 29 April 1998.

²⁶ The New York Times, 10 May 1998.

between the SRJ and EU member states,²⁷ though this did not come into effect until September.

As fighting continued in Kosovo, the IC supplemented its isolation policy with the use military force in the form of a NATO bombing campaign in an effort to compel the Serbian authorities to comply with its terms. As the bombing continued, however, the IC continued to tighten sanctions against the SRJ, increasingly implementing measures designed to target the Milošević regime directly. In late April 1999, the EU agreed to impose an oil embargo against Yugoslavia, which was supported by the US,²⁸ and also extended to the visa ban to include Milošević, his family, all Serbian and Yugoslav ministers and senior officials, and other individuals closely associated with the regime. In addition, the scope of the assets freeze was extended to cover individuals and private sector companies with links to the regime.²⁹ The EU also imposed a total ban on flights between EU member states and the SRJ.³⁰ Furthermore, while attempts to introduce a prohibition on sporting contacts with the SRJ were blocked by Greece and Italy on the grounds that this would be targeting Serbia's population and not its government, the EU, nevertheless, recommended that sporting federations exclude the SRJ.³¹

While the sanctions that were imposed against the SRJ in 1998 and 1999 were more limited in geographical scope, being implemented primarily by the US and the EU rather than the UN, they did nevertheless subject Serbia to considerable international isolation in all four areas identified by Geldenhuys, and most of the sanctions were also supported by non-EU European states and Canada, thus extending the scope of Serbia's

²⁷ Cardiff European Council, Declaration on Kosovo, 26 June 1998.

²⁸ US Department of State, Daily Press Briefing, 27 April 1999.

²⁹ Press Release PRES/99/118, 2173rd Council meeting, General Affairs, Luxembourg, 26 April 1999.

³⁰ Agence France Presse, 21 May 1999.

³¹ Associated Press Worldstream, 26 April 1999.

isolation. However, while many of the sanctions were decided by the Contact Group, which included Russia, Russia dissociated itself from the Contact Group sanctions. As in earlier time periods, sanctions were imposed with the aim of coercing the Milošević regime in the hope that this would result in a policy change, and as such this was policy-directed isolation. This time period also saw the first attempts to target sanctions directly at the Milošević regime, although some sanctions such as the oil embargo and the flight ban clearly affected the entire population, as indeed, did the NATO air strikes.

Case Study 5: The IC and the Fall of Milošević

This time period begins in June 1999 with the end of the NATO bombing and continues until October 2000 with the fall of the Milošević regime. At this time the approach of the IC was significantly different than had been the case in all previous time periods in that the IC now explicitly sought Milošević's removal from power and worked with Serbia's democratic opposition forces in an attempt to achieve this aim. Throughout this time period, Serbia remained subject to international sanctions and was even refused reconstruction assistance while Milošević remained in power. However, efforts were made to target sanctions directly at the regime, while simultaneously attempts were made to alleviate the damage caused to Serbia's population. To this end, in September 1999 the EU rescinded its earlier recommendation on curtailing sporting links with the SRJ,³² and in February 2000 introduced a temporary suspension of the flight ban.³³ In addition, a programme to provide heating oil to municipalities under the control of the democratic

³² RAPID, Commission of the European Communities, Council of Ministers Press release, PRES 99/263, 2201st Council Meeting, General Affairs, Brussels, 13 September 1999.

³³ European Report, 22 March 2000.

opposition parties, the Energy for Democracy programme, began in late 1999. In terms of attempts to target the regime directly, the EU and the US steadily increased the number of regime associates and supporters who were subject to its visa ban, while financial sanctions were also tightened with the EU banning all trade with any Serbian firms unless they appeared on the EU's 'white list' of approved companies. The primary criterion for inclusion on the white list was that companies be able to withhold all earnings from the Serbian authorities.³⁴

During this time period, Serbia was subject an extremely high degree of political and diplomatic isolation with very few contacts between the Serbian authorities and their counterparts in other states or international institutions. The extent of the isolation of the authorities is clear in both the refusal to grant travel visas to government officials, and also in the increasing contact between IC representatives and the leaders of the democratic opposition. Indeed, as shall be seen in chapter 7, at this time the democratic opposition increasingly came to be seen as Serbia's legitimate representative in the international arena. At the beginning of this time period, Serbia was also isolated in the military, economic and socio-cultural spheres, though the level of this isolation was somewhat reduced throughout 1999 and 2000, particularly in the socio-cultural sphere. Furthermore, although Serbia was subject to economic isolation, attempts were made to alleviate the consequences to Serbia's population, while measures targeting the regime were steadily increased. A further change that took place in this time period was the target of the isolation policy. While previously, coercive measures were intended to compel the Milošević regime to comply with international demands, in this time period

³⁴ European Report, 27 September 2000

the aim of international coercion was regime change, with the removal of the Milošević regime becoming the key international objective at this time.

Through examining Serbia's experience of international isolation within the context of Geldenhuys' framework, and noting also the other measures that were employed by the IC in its efforts to pursue its objectives with respect to Serbia, the time period from 1992 to 2000 can be divided into a series of five sub-periods each of which involved a different strategy on the part of the IC. Given that the central focus of this study is to examine the impact of international policy and international actions on the democratic opposition parties in Serbia, the ability to break down the entire time period considered here into a series of sub-periods is fortuitous as it allows for comparison of the impact of a range of policy strategies on the part of the international community and to consider how these different strategies impacted on the Serbian democratic opposition and its effectiveness in opposing the Milošević regime.

The Research Questions

As outlined at the end of chapter one, there are three main themes in this research: the extent to which the democratic opposition parties held different views to the Milošević regime; the nature of the democratic opposition parties relationship with the IC; and the impact of international policy on the democratic opposition parties' effectiveness. These themes form the basis of three research questions. Each of these themes or questions is rather broad and is intended to capture the range of factors that are significant in considering the impact of international policy on the democratic opposition parties. While the questions are broad, some of the information that is being sought is

quite specific, and as such it is necessary to devise a series of more specific sub-questions to capture the detail required to provide a meaningful answer to each of the three central research questions.

1. To what extent did the democratic opposition hold positions that were different to those of the Milošević regime on the issues that were of key importance to the IC in its dealings with Serbia?

The first objective of this research will be to consider whether or not the democratic opposition parties held positions on key issues of international concern that differed from those of the Milošević regime. In order to answer this question it is necessary to establish which international actors constituted the IC in each time period, and which issues it considered to be of central concern in its dealings with Serbia. It will be assumed that the most important issues are those which international actors raised regularly in the statements they made on Serbia. Of particular importance in this regard will be the stated reasons for the imposition of coercive policies. As such, the sub-questions to be considered when answering this particular question are:

- What actors constituted the IC in this time period?
- What were the issues that were of key importance to these actors in relation to Serbia?
- What were the stated reasons for subjecting Serbia to international isolation or other coercive measures?

- Did the democratic opposition parties considered in this study hold positions that were different from those of the Milošević regime on the issues that were highlighted by the IC as being important?
2. What was the relationship between the democratic opposition parties and the IC during this time period?

This question is designed to provide an overall picture of the relationship between the democratic opposition parties and the IC in each time period. This relationship will be examined in terms of the extent to which there was any formal contact between the two; the extent to which the IC provided support to the democratic opposition parties in their campaigns against the Milošević regime; the extent to which the IC raised the same issues as the opposition during the same time periods; and also in terms of how each perceived the other. When considering formal contact between the democratic opposition parties and the IC, it will be necessary to establish whether meetings took place between representatives of the IC and representatives of the democratic opposition. In relation to whether there was international support for the opposition's campaigns against Milošević, it is important to consider the nature and extent of such support, if it existed. Support may have been merely verbal, or may have gone beyond this to provide direct assistance to the democratic opposition. Consideration will also be given to whether there is any evidence of tacit support to the democratic opposition, though it is acknowledged that this may be more difficult to identify than overt support. In relation to the attitudes of the democratic opposition parties towards the IC, the type of information being sought

will be the extent to which they were critical of international policy and actions and on what grounds they based their criticism. Of particular importance will be whether the democratic opposition parties believed that international actors were undermining them in their campaigns against the regime, and also whether they perceived that the IC was either explicitly or implicitly supporting the Milošević regime. The sub-questions that are designed to capture this information are as follows:

- What were the main activities of the democratic opposition parties in terms of their attempts to defeat the Milošević regime?
- Did meetings take place between representatives of the democratic opposition parties and representatives of the IC? If so, what was their purpose?
- Were any differences that did exist between the democratic opposition parties and the Milošević regime acknowledged by international actors?
- Did the IC voice support for the opposition's campaigns against the Milošević regime? If so, was this followed by more concrete measures of support?
- Did the IC imply support for any of the opposition's campaigns by raising the same issues as the opposition parties in the same time period that the opposition was campaigning?
- Were the democratic opposition parties critical of international policy with respect to Serbia?
- Did the opposition parties express concern that international policies may have been undermining their efforts against the regime?

- Did the opposition parties feel that the IC was supporting the Milošević regime or that international actors contributed directly to the failure of its campaigns?
3. What, if any, impact did the international policy have on the effectiveness of the democratic opposition parties in their campaigns against the Milošević regime?

This question directly addresses the issue at the heart of this research. Using the criteria established in chapter one, the impact of the IC on the democratic opposition parties will be judged according to whether international policy or actions with respect to Serbia hindered or helped the democratic opposition parties in carrying out the tasks of resisting integration into the regime; maintaining zones of ideological autonomy; questioning the legitimacy of the regime and raising the costs of authoritarian rule; or presenting a credible alternative to the Milošević regime in both the international and the domestic arena. In addition, evidence as to whether international policy or actions exacerbated the weaknesses of the democratic opposition parties or helped them to overcome those weaknesses will also be considered. When considering the impact of international policy on the democratic opposition parties both direct and indirect impact will be considered.

- What were the key factors contributing to the success/failure of the opposition's campaigns in this time period?
- Did international policy play a role in helping/hindering the democratic opposition parties in carrying out the four tasks identified as being important in effectively opposing the Milošević regime?

- Did international policy play a role in exacerbating the weaknesses of the democratic opposition parties or in helping the opposition parties to overcome those weaknesses?
- Did international policy contribute to the success or failure of the opposition's campaigns, either directly or indirectly?

In essence there are two sets of data necessary to address these questions, that relating to the international community and that relating to Serbia's democratic opposition parties. As noted, the key international actors dealing with Serbia changed over time, with different combinations of states and international institutions taking the lead in each of the five time periods that are considered in this study. As such, the data needed will be gathered from a variety of sources. Between 1992 and 2000 the international actors that played the most prominent role in the events that are outlined in this research were the UN Security Council, the EC/EU and its member states, the US, NATO, the CSCE/OSCE and the Contact Group. As such, the material consulted in order to identify the central issues for the IC will be:

- UN Security Council Resolutions
- Press statements, speeches and policy documents from the EC/EU gathered from Lexis Nexis and the European Commission press release database, Rapid.
- Statements, press releases and interviews from the US State Department and the White House, gathered from the US State Department online archive, the Federal

Documents Clearing House documents available through Lexis Nexis and other press material available through Lexis Nexis

- CSCE/OSCE statements, press releases and reports
- NATO statements, press releases and report
- Contact Group statements

In relation to the Serbian democratic opposition parties, the focus will be on what the key figures within the democratic opposition parties had to say about these events at the time that they occurred. While occasionally retrospective accounts of events by the party members may be used, this will be clearly noted. As such, the primary data involved will be the statements of the democratic opposition parties and their leaders, and media interviews and documents relating to the issues that are being examined. As such, the primary sources of material relating to the democratic opposition parties will be:

- The *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* and *BBC Monitoring*, both accessed through Lexis Nexis
- *NIN* news magazine archive (1996-2000)
<http://www.nin.co.yu/arhiva/index.html>
- *Vreme* CD-ROM (Complete edition 1997-2000)
- *Vreme News Digest Agency* (1991-1997).
http://www.scc.rutgers.edu/serbian_digest/
- B92 news archive (1999-2000)
http://www.b92.net/eng/news/old_archive.php

- Institute for War and Peace Reporting *Balkan Crisis Report* (1999-2000)

<http://www.iwpr.net>

- AIM press –Alternative Information Network

<http://www.aimpress.ch>

Chapter 3: The Beginning of Isolation

This case study begins in May 1992 when the UN Security Council first imposed sanctions against the SRJ and continues until December 1992 and the opposition's unsuccessful challenge to the Milošević regime in federal and republican elections. The imposition of UN sanctions in May marked the beginning of Serbia's international isolation and throughout the remainder of 1992 the IC strengthened and tightened these sanctions. The coercive measures imposed against Serbia in this period were in response to the conflicts that were occurring in the former Yugoslavia, in particular the war that was taking place in Bosnia, and this conflict was the central focus of the IC in its dealings with Serbia throughout this time period.

Between May and December 1992, the democratic opposition mounted three significant challenges against the Milošević regime: a boycott of the May 1992 federal elections, their challenge to the regime in the December 1992 elections for the federal and republican parliaments and the republican presidency, and a series of anti-regime protests in June 1992 that aimed to bring about Milošević's resignation. All three of these challenges failed.

As most IC dealings with Serbia during this time period occurred within the context of the dissolution of the SFRJ and the ensuing conflict, the international actors that had the most significant impact on Serbia were those that were most heavily involved in efforts to formulate an international response to these events: the EC, the CSCE, the UN Security Council and the US. This chapter will begin by looking at the statements of international actors dealing with Serbia, and also at the reasons for the imposition of

sanctions against Serbia. This will identify the key issues for the IC during this time period. Following this the opposition's challenges to the Milošević regime - the May and December elections and the June 1992 protests - will be considered, as will the challenge posed by Milan Panić as federal prime minister. Given that these challenges occurred at a time when the IC was taking its first steps to isolate Serbia this case study allows for an examination of the reaction of the democratic opposition to these moves and to consider how they affected the relationship between the democratic opposition parties and the IC, and how they impacted on the effectiveness of the opposition's challenges to the Milošević regime.

Key Issues for the International Community

When war began in Bosnia in the spring of 1992, Serbia began to come under significant international pressure as the IC identified the Serbian authorities as the main instigators of the conflict and increasingly threatened international isolation if Serbia did not change its behaviour. On 15 April 1992 the CSCE issued a statement calling for the withdrawal from Bosnia of forces of the former Yugoslavia's army, the JNA, by 29 April and for the Yugoslav and Serbian authorities to respect Bosnia's independence and its legitimate government.¹ The US was particularly harsh in its condemnation of the Serbian authorities at this point, and at the CSCE meeting the US representative John Kornblum made a strongly worded statement condemning Serbian actions in Bosnia and

¹ Agence France Press, 16 April 1992.

threatening Serbia with expulsion from the CSCE.² Some weeks later, Kornblum called for Yugoslavia's immediate suspension from the CSCE.³ However, although supported by the EC,⁴ the move to exclude the SRJ from the CSCE was blocked by Russia.⁵ Nevertheless, on 12 May, the CSCE decided to exclude the SRJ from any decisions relating to Bosnia until 29 June, when the situation would again be reviewed.⁶

The EC was also increasingly critical of the Serbian authorities.⁷ On 11 May EC foreign ministers issued a statement which identified the Yugoslav army and the Belgrade authorities as the parties most to blame for 'the present state of affairs.'⁸ Threatening Serbia with international isolation, the EC foreign ministers decided to recall their ambassadors from Belgrade for consultations, and requested the EC Commission to examine possible economic sanctions against the SRJ.⁹ This was followed by a US decision to recall its ambassador from Belgrade.¹⁰

While the Serbian authorities condemned the EC's statement, the democratic opposition used these initial moves towards isolating Serbia to criticise the regime, choosing to highlight the costs of Milošević's policies rather than allying with the regime against an external aggressor. Mihailo Marković of the SPO stated that 'the EC move

² US Department of State Daily Briefing # 57, 15 April 1992. A State Department spokesperson reiterated this condemnation and stated that if Serbia's leaders 'continue their aggression against Bosnia, and to deny human rights to Serbia's own citizens, Serbia will very quickly become an international pariah.'

³ US Department of State Daily Briefing # 69, 6 May 1992. Kornblum also demanded an immediate end to violence and respect for ceasefire agreements, the withdrawal of the JNA from Bosnia or its submission to the legitimate Bosnian authorities, and honest co-operation with the EC peace process and the UN and EC mission.

⁴ *The Guardian*, 12 May 1992.

⁵ Tanjug, 7 May 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1375/C1/1, 8 May 1992.

⁶ Federal News Service, 12 May 1992.

⁷ On 1 May, the EC had suspended the peace talks that had been taking place because of Serbian violations of ceasefire agreements that had been reached in mid-April (The Associated Press, 1 May 1992).

⁸ United Press International, 12 May 1992. The EC demanded a complete withdrawal of the JNA from Bosnia and the reopening of Sarajevo airport to allow for the distribution of humanitarian aid.

⁹ United Press International, 12 May 1992.

¹⁰ Department of State Dispatch, 18 May 1992.

should not be [a] surprise for Serbia. It is addressed to its government and the military, and it shows the EC has lost patience with Milošević.’¹¹ Similarly, DS Deputy Mirko Petrović stated: ‘It is good to ask what led Europe to act this way. Although no side is innocent in the Bosnian conflict, a very big responsibility lies on Milošević’.¹²

International pressure was further increased when the UN Security Council passed Resolution 752 on 15 May. This resolution called for an end to the fighting and the resumption of peace talks; and demanded that external interference in Bosnia cease, and that units of the Croatian and Yugoslav armies in Bosnia be withdrawn or subjected to the authority of the Bosnian government or disbanded and disarmed.¹³ These demands for an end to external interference in the Bosnian conflict were to remain the central concern for the IC throughout the time period considered in this case study and it was the failure of the Serbian authorities to comply with demands of Resolution 752 that led to the initial imposition of UN sanctions under Resolution 757.¹⁴

In spite of the last minute efforts of Milošević to avoid international sanctions,¹⁵ on 30 May the Security Council passed Resolution 757.¹⁶ As noted above, the sanctions were imposed because of the alleged failure of the Serbian authorities to comply with the

¹¹ IPS-Inter Press Service, 14 May 1992.

¹² IPS-Inter Press Service, 14 May 1992.

¹³ UN Security Council Resolution 752. Resolution 752 also called for an end to forced expulsions or attempts to change the ethnic composition of the population, and the unhindered delivery of humanitarian aid, including secure and safe access to Bosnia’s airports.

¹⁴ Serbia’s isolation was also increased in advance of the imposition of US sanctions, with the US refusing landing rights to JAT airlines in US airports in mid-May; and closing two of the three remaining Yugoslav consulates, withdrawing its military attachés from Belgrade and ordering the expulsion of their Yugoslav counterparts from the US on 22 May (US Department of State Daily Briefing #79, 20 May 1992; *The Financial Times*, 23 May 1992). In addition the EC imposed limited trade sanctions against the SRJ on 27 May and called on the UN to impose an oil embargo and an asset freeze. These calls were supported by the US (United Press International, 28 May 1992).

¹⁵ These included an offer to work with the UN to bring about an end to the fighting in Bosnia; a pledge to urge the Bosnian Serbs to cooperate with the UN, and a proposal that armed forces in Bosnia be placed under joint US-Russian control (*The Independent*, 27 May 1992; Agence France Presse, 30 May 1992).

¹⁶ The vote was passed by 13-0 with China and Zimbabwe abstaining.

demands of Resolution 752 and as such Serbia was subjected to international isolation on the grounds that the Belgrade authorities were interfering in the Bosnian conflict and providing support to Bosnian Serb forces.

Throughout June and July 1992 the Western European Union (WEU), the EC, the CSCE and the G7 issued declarations on the situation in former Yugoslavia and these statements clearly show the extent to which the Bosnian conflict was the central concern of the IC in its dealings with Serbia.¹⁷ The conflict in Bosnia and the humanitarian situation there are the primary focus of all these statements, which condemned the Serbian authorities for their role in the conflict. While the CSCE Parliamentary Assembly's 'Declaration on Yugoslavia' does make reference to the situation inside Serbia, this is exclusively related to the need to respect rights of minorities within Serbia, and in particular the Kosovo Albanians.¹⁸ Similarly, the EC's 'European Council Declaration on the Former Yugoslavia', called on the Serbian leadership to refrain from repression in Kosovo.¹⁹ None of the statements made any reference to the undemocratic nature of the Milošević regime, or called for democratic reform within Serbia.

From the above statements and resolutions it is clear that, at this time, in all its dealings with Serbia, the IC's primary focus was on the Bosnian conflict and the role of the Belgrade authorities in giving support to the Bosnian Serb forces there. This was the reason for the imposition of UN sanctions, and when the initial sanctions failed to induce

¹⁷ WEU Declaration on the Yugoslav Crisis, Bonn, 19 June 1992; European Council in Lisbon (26-27 June 1992): Conclusion of the Presidency, 27 June 1992; Budapest Declaration of the CSCE Parliamentary Assembly, 5 July 1992; Declaration on Former Yugoslavia, G7 Summit, 7 July 1992; Tanjug, 12 July 1992 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1432/C1/1, 14 July 1992. In addition to the statements on Yugoslavia that the CSCE made at this time, its Committee of Senior Officials also increased Serbia's international isolation when it decided to suspend the SRJ's membership of the institution until 14 October. Only Russia's refusal to back Yugoslavia's complete exclusion from the CSCE saved it from expulsion (*The Washington Times*, 9 July 1992).

¹⁸ Budapest Declaration of the CSCE Parliamentary Assembly, 5 July 1992.

¹⁹ European Council in Lisbon (26-27 June 1992): Conclusion of the Presidency, 27 June 1992.

the change in behaviour that the IC hoped they would, the international response was to increase the pressure through tightening these sanctions. As will be seen, while the IC was aware of the undemocratic nature of Milošević's rule, and of the obstacles that the democratic opposition parties faced in their struggles against the regime, this was not of central concern to any significant international actor throughout the time period considered in this case study.

Differences between the democratic opposition parties and the Milošević regime

In order to evaluate the differences between the positions of the democratic opposition parties and those of the Milošević regime, on the issues that were of central concern to the IC, it is first necessary to briefly outline the position of the Milošević regime. It is not the purpose of this research to analyse the role played by Milošević and his associates in the conflicts that occurred in the former-Yugoslavia, but there is a general consensus that Milošević fomented conflict in other former-Yugoslav republics in order to maintain power (Gagnon, 1994: 118; Gordy, 1999: 24; Ramet, 2002: 338). Gagnon argues that the wars in Croatia and Bosnia had 'been part of a purposeful and rational strategy planned and carried out by the minority of political actors in Serbia who were most threatened by democratizing and liberalizing currents within the Serbian Communist party' (Gagnon, 1994: 118). Similarly, Gordy argues that war 'constituted a vital part of the destruction of alternatives' that enabled the regime to maintain power, and supports the argument that 'war was permitted to happen because if it had not, democratic reforms might have happened' (Gordy, 1999: 24). Milošević and his allies in the Serbian communist party attempted to extend their control throughout the former

Yugoslavia in an effort to build a more centralised state. When this failed, and as other former Yugoslav republics declared independence from the joint state, Milošević and his allies attempted to carve out a 'greater Serbia', and realise the Serbian nationalist goal of building a state in which all Serbs could live (Gagnon, 1994: 118). As such, at the beginning of this time period, Milošević was attempting to carve out a 'greater Serbia' from the ruins of the former-Yugoslavia, using armed conflict in those former-Yugoslav republics that had a sizable Serbian minority. Therefore, in order to compare the positions of the democratic opposition parties with those of the regime at this time, it is necessary to ascertain the attitudes of those parties to the creation of a Greater Serbia, and their positions regarding whether they believed that war was an appropriate means of achieving such ends. An examination of the positions of the parties included in this study indicates that, during the latter half of 1992 at least, their positions can be considered to have differed from those of the Milošević regime in subtle but significant ways.

As noted in chapter two, in its early days the SPO had advocated an extreme nationalist position and was fully in favour of the creation of a unified state of all Serb lands that had been part of the former-Yugoslavia. Following its defeat in elections in 1990, however, the party moved towards the centre and began to prioritise democracy over national issues, while opposing violent conflict. As Stojanović notes, '[Drašković's] anti-war messages announced before the outbreak of war show that he had rejected national extremism and that he would offer Serbia different rhetoric in stormy times ahead' (Stojanović, 2000: 468-469). Thus, although still resorting to nationalist rhetoric on occasion, for example his appeal to the IC to 'stop the Ustaša hordes now ravaging

Bosnia-Hercegovina' at an opposition rally in July 1992,²⁰ by May 1992, Drašković and the SPO had become outspoken critics of the Milošević regime's war policies.²¹ While Drašković clearly condemned the Serbian regime for its actions with respect to the Bosnian war, he was also critical of the leaderships of the other Bosnian communities, and emphasised that some of the war's victims were Serbs.²²

Throughout the time period considered in this case study, Drašković spoke out forcefully against the war in Bosnia, and as such, even if he did not abandon the hope that there may some day be a greater Serbian state, he clearly did not advocate that this should be achieved through force. Therefore, the position of the SPO clearly differed from that of the Milošević regime and was closer to that of the IC at this time.

In common with the SPO, the GSS also condemned the war in Bosnia and the actions of the Milošević regime. At its foundation, the GSS included among its goals the pacification of Serbia and its liberation from nationalism, the moving of Serbia from the path of war towards peace, the establishment of normal relations with the other former-Yugoslav republics with negotiations on the rights of Serbs living within these states, and the resolution of the autonomy and status of Kosovo and Vojvodina.²³ The very identity of the GSS was as an anti-nationalist and anti-war party and as such its positions throughout the time period covered by this case study differed significantly from those of the Milošević regime, supporting neither the war, nor the creation of a greater Serbia.

²⁰ Tanjug, 5 July 1992 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1424/C1/2, 7 July 1992.

²¹ Drašković's opposition to the war is also evident in an article he wrote titled 'Appeal to the citizens of Bosnia and Hercegovina' published at the beginning of April 1992, in which he called on all nations in Bosnia to reject war (Thomas, 1999: 119). Furthermore, speaking to journalists in May 1992 Drašković claimed that he wanted to go to Sarajevo 'to convey a great apology in the name of the Serbian nation which did not want this and was never asked for its consent' (Radio Belgrade, 31 May 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1396/C1/1, 2 June 1992).

²² Tanjug, 4 June 1992 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1399/C1/7, 6 June 1992.

²³ Tanjug, 10 June 1992 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1405/C1/1, 12 June 1992.

From its inception, the identity of the DS 'fluctuated constantly between liberal democratic and nationalist', with the national questions being 'a constant source of discord' within the party, and a factor in some of its numerous splits (Vukomanović, 1998: 37-38). These different perspectives are evident when considering the attitudes of some of the senior DS members in 1992. In July 1992, DS leader Dragoljub Mićunović travelled to the US to discuss DS proposals on an international peace conference with the aim of resolving the Bosnian conflict known as the 'five plus five' initiative. According to this plan, a peace conference would be held under the auspices of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, together with representatives of Bosnia's three national groups, and representatives from Yugoslavia and Croatia. The SRJ and Croatia 'would undertake an obligation to respect the territorial integrity of Bosnia-Hercegovina and that they would not encourage secession in this republic.'²⁴ This plan clearly does not indicate support for Milošević's objectives of securing a greater Serbia through force. In addition, future party leader Zoran Djindjić criticised Milošević's means in trying to achieve Serbia's national goals: 'One must not forget: the problems of the Serbs are real. ... Milošević's means are wrong. Of course the problem is integration of the people who live scattered over a small area. Those people should be truly connected, so that they will pulsate [as] a whole, and then [one should] draw borders.'²⁵ While this does indicate a level of support for the creation of some sort of 'greater Serbia,' Djindjić nevertheless does not agree with Milošević's methods. As such, while it can be argued that some DS leaders favoured the creation of a greater Serbia, there is little evidence of support for

²⁴ Tanjug, 15 July 1992 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1436/C1/1, 18 July 1992.

²⁵ Djindjić cited in Anastasijević, 2000: 114-115.

achieving this goal through armed conflict, and as such, at this time, the DS also differed from Milošević on the positions that were of key concern to the IC.

Although the DSS was to become a party with a strongly nationalist orientation, its initial focus was on Serbia, rather than the Serb populated lands of other former-Yugoslav republics (Stojanović, 2000: 470; Thomas, 1999: 151). Although Koštunica did aspire to a state in which all Serbs could live, he did not see this as something that could be achieved through the means employed by Milošević. Speaking in 1992, Koštunica noted that: 'The political and cultural unity of Serbs within the area of the former Yugoslavia – which is one of the goals of the DSS ... can be achieved, of course, gradually, on condition that Serbia becomes a strong and democratic country.'²⁶ In addition, Koštunica's participation in the recently formed Democratic Movement of Serbia²⁷ (DEPOS – Demokratski Pokret Srbije), an opposition coalition led by the SPO, at this time a firmly anti-war party, would also indicate that at in 1992 the DSS did not support the use of force to create a greater Serbia.

From the above, it is, therefore, clear that while some of the parties considered here may have expressed support for the creation of a greater Serbian state, none had argued that this should be achieved through war. Given this, it is possible to state that the policies of the democratic opposition parties were not identical to those of the Milošević regime on the issues that were of key importance to the IC. While there may have been a certain agreement on what should be Serbia's ultimate goals, there appears to have been no support for Milošević's approach of achieving these goals through war. Furthermore,

²⁶ Koštunica cited in Cigar, 2001: 34.

²⁷ DEPOS was formed in May 1992, by the SPO and a number of smaller parties. While the DS decided not to join DEPOS, a faction within the party, headed by Vojislav Koštunica, supported the coalition, and when this faction split off from the DS in July 1992 to form the DSS, Koštunica's party joined DEPOS.

given that these views were publicly stated, the IC should have been well aware that in 1992 the positions of the democratic opposition parties on the issues that were of central concern to international actors were closer to those of the IC than they were to those of the Milošević regime.

Challenges to the Milošević Regime

The May 1992 elections

Following international recognition of other former Yugoslav republics as independent states, without consulting the opposition, the Serbian and Montenegrin authorities announced the creation of a new Yugoslav state comprising the two republics, announced that federal elections would take place on 31 May and passed electoral laws that would govern those elections, again without consulting the opposition whose demands for improved electoral conditions were ignored.²⁸ In protest, and openly disputing the legitimacy of the new state, the opposition responded by boycotting the elections, with all parties considered here agreeing on this strategy. However, in spite of the opposition boycott the turnout was 56% in Serbia (Goati, 1998: 13). Although not particularly high, this figure nonetheless was considerably higher than the opposition must have hoped for. Nevertheless, the boycotting of the first SRJ elections by much of the political opposition further undermined the internal political legitimacy of the new state (Sekelj, 2000: 63), and as such is a clear illustration of the democratic opposition fulfilling the task of questioning the regime's legitimacy.

²⁸ While the opposition did not object to the creation of the new state in principle, it did object to the manner in which this was brought about (Goati, 1998: 1). Goati argues that the manner in which the SRJ was created, using the remnants of the SFRJ assembly, was designed to strengthen the argument that it was the sole successor of the SFRJ (Goati, 1998: 12-13).

An opposition demonstration, supported by the Centre for Anti-War Action,²⁹ the SPO and the DS, was held on May 31, the day of the election, to protest about the holding of the elections and to commemorate those killed in the fighting in Bosnia and Croatia.³⁰ Coming the day after the passing of Resolution 757, this meeting gave opposition leaders a chance to comment on the sanctions, and Drašković used the occasion to lay the blame for Serbia's international isolation on the Milošević regime rather than the UN or the IC. According to Drašković: 'The enemies of the Serbian people are not abroad but in Belgrade.'³¹ Drašković expressed the view that the sanctions were being directed against the regime and even appeared to welcome them as something which could help the opposition in its struggle against Milošević.³² However, while he described sanctions against the regime as 'indispensable,' Drašković emphasised that they should not be directed against the Serbian people, as they were 'not to blame.'³³ Drašković was not entirely uncritical of the sanctions, however. In late June he wrote to the UN Secretary General, complaining that sanctions were 'punishing only the Serbian people, despite the fact that opposition to war in the former Yugoslavia was never as strong and nowhere as unanimous and determined than in Serbia and Montenegro.' He called for sanctions to be lifted in advance of opposition demonstrations scheduled for 28 June, and criticised the UN for its 'benevolent stand towards the fascist militarism of

²⁹ The Centre for Anti-War Action was founded in July 1991, when hostilities began in Slovenia, as a group to represent citizens opposed to war in the former Yugoslavia. Vesna Pešić was a co-founder and director. See Šušak, 2000.

³⁰ The Associated Press, 31 May 1992.

³¹ The Associated Press, 31 May 1992. Drašković repeated his assertion that the real enemies of Serbia were the Belgrade authorities rather than the IC at a press conference held four days later, Tanjug, 4 June 1992 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1399/C1/7, 6 June 1992.

³² Drašković stated that: 'The (UN) sanctions are not against the Serbian people. They are against the regime. They are a support to us to stand up against ... communism and rising fascism' (United Press International, 31 May 1992).

³³ Tanjug, 31 May 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1396/C1/1, 2 June 1992.

Croatian President Franjo Tudjman,' which, he argued 'is practically encouraging the crimes of one side.' Drašković also expressed surprise that Europe and the UN were negotiating with the Belgrade and Zagreb regimes, while at the same time 'punishing millions of people who do not want the war.'³⁴

Leading members of the DS were also critical of the decision to impose sanctions against Serbia and expressed concern at the possible consequences of these actions. Mićunović argued that sanctions were harming Yugoslavia's citizens and were 'hurting least of all the current government,' and envisaged long lasting consequences 'from which even our descendents will suffer.'³⁵ Speaking in the context of the danger of civil war in Serbia, Djindjić noted that the 'blockade and international isolation of Serbia further strengthened already existing political tensions.'³⁶ Koštunica also expressed concern when, speaking in advance of the decision to impose the sanctions, he stated that economic sanctions 'might be counterproductive.'³⁷

The external pressure on Milošević and the imposition of UN sanctions reinforced his domestic opponents as many of them began to call for his resignation in order to get the sanctions lifted. Undoubtedly, at this time, the sanctions provided the opposition with a stick with which to beat the Milošević regime and numerous opposition members made statements linking the removal of Milošević with an end to Serbia's international isolation. Although the Security Council had not specified that this was what was required to ensure the lifting of sanctions, the democratic opposition appeared to believe that this was the case, or, at a minimum, used this argument to strengthen themselves vis-

³⁴ Tanjug, 26 June 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1419/C1/1, 29 June 1992

³⁵ Tanjug, 2 June 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1399/C1/1, 5 June 1992

³⁶ IPS-Inter Press Service, 17 June 1992

³⁷ ABC World News Tonight transcript, 28 May 1992

à-vis the regime. According to Drašković: 'I am sure after forcing Milošević to resign, the blockade of our people will be finished.'³⁸ Others did not consider that the removal of Milošević was all that would be necessary to have the sanctions removed, but nevertheless, still seemed to see the two as linked. A leading member of Koštunica's pro-DEPOS wing of the DS, stated that 'The choice is very simple. With Milošević, the sanctions remain and we are certainly dead. Without him we may live.'³⁹

It is interesting to note that most of the focus of the opposition's calls to have sanctions lifted centred on the need for Milošević's resignation, even though this was not explicitly stated as something that was required to achieve Serbia's reintegration into the world community, and which ultimately proved to be unnecessary. Although many opposition politicians spoke out against the war in Bosnia, and Milošević's war policies, this issue received considerably less attention from the democratic opposition when it discussed the need to end Serbia's international isolation, in spite of the fact that it was Serbian actions with respect to the Bosnian war that resulted in the sanctions being imposed in the first place. A notable exception in this regard was Vesna Pešić who called for an immediate end to the conflict and the recognition of the former Yugoslav republics, as the only measure that would bring Serbia's international isolation to an end.⁴⁰

³⁸ IPS-Inter Press Services, 13 June 1992. Matija Bećković, another prominent DEPOS member, also seemed to believe that the removal of Milošević was what was required if the sanctions were to be lifted and stated that 'Replacing the regime that had brought Serbia to its knees is a small price to pay for the UN sanctions to be lifted' (IPS-Inter Press Services, 10 June 1992).

³⁹ The Associated Press, 24 June 1992. Slobodan Selenić, also a DEPOS member expressed a similar opinion: 'it's quite sure there can be no talks with those who imposed sanctions on Serbia while [Milošević] is in power. His resignation is one of the preconditions for the talks so start' (IPS-Inter Press Services, 10 June 1992).

⁴⁰ Vesna Pešić, quoted in Dimitrijević and Pejić, 1992, p. 9.

Nevertheless, while there was condemnation of the sanctions, at this time the democratic opposition parties did not seem to view international isolation and the imposition of sanctions as something that was undermining their campaigns against Milošević. On the contrary, and as is also noted by Dimitrijević and Pejić, the sanctions 'deepened existing political differences, even weakened official Serbia and spurred the opposition to increasingly vehement criticism of and action against the government' (Dimitrijević and Pejić, 1992: 5). Furthermore, the democratic opposition parties, though critical of the sanctions, did not launch any concerted campaign against the IC for imposing them, rather, Milošević was blamed for the fact that Serbia was now internationally isolated.

The Vidovan Sabor

Throughout June 1992, Milošević faced a series of protests and demonstrations from the democratic opposition and other groups, including students and the Serbian Orthodox Church. The culmination of this anti-regime activity was the Vidovdan Sabor, a series of demonstrations organised by DEPOS which began on 28 June and lasted until 5 July, and which ran parallel with a series of student demonstrations that had begun on 4 June and continued for forty days (Thomas, 1999: 113).

DEPOS had written to Milošević in early June giving him seven days to resign or to face street protests that would begin on 21 June.⁴¹ In advance of the protests, Milošević had taken steps in an attempt to alleviate internal pressure. On 26 June, the Serbian parliament voted in favour of holding parliamentary elections by the end of the year,

⁴¹ IPS-Inter Press Service, 10 June 1992

while an earlier move was the election on 15 June by the federal parliament of Dobrica Ćosić as the first president of the SRJ. Ćosić, a former dissident, declared patriot, well-known writer and anti-communist, was highly regarded within Serbia. Through his appointment Milošević believed that the opposition could be placated, and that the newly formed federal state may gain some legitimacy. Antonić also believes that Milošević would have calculated that Ćosić would be politically naïve⁴² (Antonić, 2002: 130). Following Ćosić's election and his call for federal elections to be held before the end of the year, DEPOS had postponed the demonstrations, which began a week later on 28 June.

At the outset of the DEPOS demonstrations the coalition issued a list of demands, including Milošević's resignation, the formation of a multiparty 'government of national salvation', the dissolution of the Serbian parliament, and media freedom. DEPOS pledged that the protests would continue until these demands were met.⁴³ Drašković clearly hoped that the experience of other Eastern European countries that had ousted communist leaders through massive protests could be emulated in Serbia and stated that 'We want Belgrade to be Prague or Sofia.'⁴⁴ The initial rally on 28 June attracted large numbers of supporters, making it 'the largest protest yet against Milošević.'⁴⁵ Furthermore, a DEPOS delegation met with Milošević and presented him with a list of their demands. Milošević responded by agreeing to test his support in elections or a referendum, (although no date was specified), and also agreed to consider the convening of round table talks.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, Drašković's hopes that large numbers of protestors would stay on the

⁴² Author's translation

⁴³ IPS-Inter Press Service, 29 June 1992

⁴⁴ IPS-Inter Press Service, 29 June 1992

⁴⁵ *The Washington Post*, 29 June 1992

⁴⁶ IPS-Inter Press Service, 29 June 1992

streets for days until Milošević was forced to resign were disappointed and the demonstrations were finally called off on 5 July.⁴⁷ Furthermore, while round table talks between government and opposition representatives to discuss the electoral conditions which led to concessions on the part of the regime, these were insufficient to ensure that the December 1992 elections would be free and fair.⁴⁸

There was a limited international reaction to the protests in Serbia and no significant international actors expressed support for the Serbian democratic opposition's demands that Milošević resign. Throughout June and July 1992, the time in which the opposition was engaged in large-scale demonstrations with the aim of removing the regime, the WEU, the EC, the CSCE and the G7 issued declarations on the situation in former Yugoslavia. None of these referred to the demonstrations taking place in Serbia, or expressed support for the opposition's attempts to oust Milošević and as noted in chapter two, only two of the statements acknowledged repression inside Serbia (the

⁴⁷ In spite of the failure of the protests to force Milošević to resign, DEPOS leaders remained upbeat. While Vladeta Janković conceded that DEPOS demands had not been met, he nevertheless proclaimed the demonstrations to have been a success. In addition, Drašković claimed that 'the regime is shaken, its fall is only a matter of days away, we might as well let it happen without bloodshed' (Agence France Presse, 6 July 1992). The student protests that included large demonstrations and a strike by Belgrade university students also had the removal of Milošević as their aim and also used the imposition of sanctions to illustrate the damage that the regime was doing to Serbia (IPS-Inter Press Services, 10 June 1992)

⁴⁸ Round table talks were held at both the federal and republican levels. The most significant concession made to the opposition at the federal level related to the nature of the electoral system. The SPS wanted a majority system but gave in to opposition demands for a proportional system. However, the opposition parties were deeply dissatisfied with both the republican level and federal level talks and the subsequent electoral laws that were passed. See Tanjug, 5 August 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1453/C1/1, 7 August 1992; Tanjug, 28 September 1992 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1501/C1/1, 2 October 1992; Tanjug, 6 October 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1507/C1/1, 9 October 1992; Tanjug, 10 October 1992 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1509/C1/1, 12 October 1992; Tanjug, 20 October 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1518/C1/1, 22 October 1992; Tanjug, 29 October 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1526/C1/1, 31 October 1992; Tanjug, 2 November 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1529/C1/1, 4 November 1992; Tanjug, 4 November 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1530/C1/1, 6 November 1992.

‘European Council Declaration on the Former Yugoslavia’ and CSCE Parliamentary Assembly’s ‘Declaration on Yugoslavia’), but referred only to the situation in Kosovo and the repression of other ethnic minorities in Serbia.⁴⁹

At the US State Department daily briefing held on 29 June 1992, a spokesperson commented that the scale of the demonstration indicated that ‘many in Belgrade do not support their regime’s current policies’. However, she stopped short of endorsing the demands of the protestors for Milošević’s resignation, stating merely that the US ‘supports the democratic forces in Serbia and Montenegro.’⁵⁰ Furthermore, US Secretary of State James Baker, following a meeting between Baker and Milan Panić⁵¹ at the CSCE summit meeting in Helsinki, was directly questioned about the possibility and consequences of Milošević’s resignation. He refused to comment on whether this issue had arisen during his discussions with Panić, and also refused to answer a question on whether or not Milošević’s resignation would constitute an improvement in relation to events in the former Yugoslavia, on the grounds that it was ‘hypothetical.’⁵²

Given that the opposition was arguing for Milošević’s resignation and the IC was laying the blame for the wars in Croatia and Bosnia at the feet of the Milošević regime, it could be argued that there was a confluence of interests between the IC and the democratic opposition. However, the IC was preoccupied with the conflict in Bosnia and

⁴⁹ With respect to Kosovo, the European Council stated that it expected the ‘Serbian leadership to refrain from further repression and to engage in serious dialogue with representatives of this territory’ (European Council in Lisbon (26-27 June 1992): Conclusion of the Presidency, 27 June 1992). While the CSCE declaration condemned Serbia’s violation of CSCE commitments and ‘the denial of fundamental rights and freedoms of ethnic Albanians in Kosovo, and of Hungarian, Muslim and other minorities on the territory of Serbia, especially in Vojvodina, and of Montenegro (Budapest Declaration of the CSCE Parliamentary Assembly, 5 July 1992).

⁵⁰ US Department of State Daily Briefing # 99, 29 June 1992

⁵¹ Milan Panić, chosen by Milošević to be the first SRJ Prime Minister was a successful, expatriate businessman who had defected from Yugoslavia in the 1950s and was a naturalised US citizen. According to Thomas, Milošević calculated that ‘Panić would project a moderate image for the government at home and abroad while being easy to control politically’ (Thomas, 1999: 123).

⁵² State Department Briefing, Federal News Service, 10 July 1992

paid little attention to Serbia's internal politics. The focus of the IC at this time was very much on the Serbian government, which it hoped it could force to alter its behaviour through a policy of enforced international isolation, and there appears to have been little, if any, formal contact between representatives of the IC and representatives of the democratic opposition parties (though there was extensive contact between Panić and IC representatives as will be seen). While comments by the US State Department show that there was some level of general, rhetorical support for democratic forces within Serbia, no international actors at this time expressed explicit support for the demands of the democratic opposition parties and other organisations within Serbia, that Milošević resign.

While the opposition protests garnered little international support, it is worth noting that the opposition parties do not appear to have asked for international support, nor do they seem to have considered that the lack of support had any bearing on the failure of the demonstrations to bring about Milošević's resignation. Pešić considered that failure resulted from that fact that the opposition itself was not 'strong enough to make Milošević leave.'⁵³ Other factors noted by Pešić included the fact that 'People here are loyal to authorities. People can't imagine that they, as citizens, can change anything' and that Milošević was doing 'a pretty good job in terms of what he promised people. He took one-third of Croatian territory and he took two-thirds of Bosnia.'⁵⁴ For Drašković, the crucial determining factor in relation to whether the demonstrations could succeed appeared to be the extent to which they received popular support. This reasoning is clear in his statement that unless one million people turned up to protest, the demonstrations

⁵³ *The Ottawa Citizen*, 3 July 1992

⁵⁴ *The Ottawa Citizen*, 3 July 1992

would fail. While Koštunica noted that 'The time is not yet right to finish Milošević, because both the regime and the people have not yet felt all the consequences of UN sanctions.'⁵⁵ Koštunica's comments also imply that he considered that UN sanctions could facilitate the removal of Milošević.

While the demonstrations did not succeed in achieving their central demand that Milošević resign, they did, nevertheless, succeed in gaining some concessions from the regime such as securing promises of early elections and consideration of the conditions in which they would be held, which allowed the democratic opposition to exert pressure on the regime to keep its promises in the months that followed. Furthermore, through highlighting the undemocratic nature of Milošević's rule, the opposition succeeded in questioning the legitimacy of the regime, one of the tasks necessary to effectively oppose the regime identified in chapter one.

Milan Panić and the London Conference

Following the imposition of sanctions against the SRJ, the most significant political development within Serbia was the election of Milan Panić as Yugoslav prime minister, and the challenges he mounted against Milošević. Panić challenged Milošević both internally and externally. Internally, Panić challenged Milošević directly by deciding to run against him in the election for Serbian president in December 1992, and externally he challenged Milošević through his attempts to cooperate with international efforts to resolve the conflicts in Bosnia and Croatia. The external dimension of Panić's challenge to the Serbian leadership was highlighted at the London Conference chaired jointly by the EC and the UN at the end of August 1992. Panić's attitudes and behaviour at this

⁵⁵ *The Washington Post*, 29 June 1992

conference, which were to have serious consequences for his position within Serbian politics, illustrate the extent to which his attitudes towards the conflict in the former-Yugoslavia and the need to meet IC demands, were significantly different to those of Milošević. In addition, Panić also demonstrated that he was prepared to fight the regime in an effort to implement his policies.

Before taking up his post, Panić included bringing the war in Bosnia to an end, and democratic and economic reform in Yugoslavia among his main goals as Yugoslav prime minister, stating also that one of his first acts would be 'to see that free, fair and democratic elections take place at all levels throughout the country within a matter of months.'⁵⁶ In an address to the federal parliament on 14 July Panić outlined his programme and explained that his policies were designed to ensure that the IC would 'accept Yugoslavia as a democratic, civil state and as an equal partner.' In relation to Bosnia Panić proposed demilitarisation under UN supervision, and promised to do all he could to withdraw any heavy weapons that were the property of the former JNA. He also acknowledged that Bosnia was an independent state and a member of the UN and stated that he wished to re-establish mutual trust and co-operation between the SRJ and the new states of the former Yugoslavia. To this end, Panić declared, 'the federal government will ... take all necessary steps regarding mutual recognition and establishment of inter-state relations' and stated that the SRJ 'has no territorial claims against neighbouring states.'⁵⁷

With a programme that was closer to that of the democratic opposition parties than to the SPS, Panić initially received qualified support from the democratic opposition.

⁵⁶ Tanjug, 2 July 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1424/C1/1, 4 July 1992

⁵⁷ Tanjug, 14 July 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1434/C1/1, 16 July 1992 Panić also promised to call for elections at all levels in Yugoslavia that his government would 'call on leaders of all political parties to start negotiations in a democratic atmosphere regarding election rules and the observance of democratic procedure.'

The DEPOS leadership welcomed Panić's readiness to consider round-table talks between the government and the opposition and to call free elections,⁵⁸ but was also a little cautious in terms of what Panić could achieve.⁵⁹ Mićunović's reaction was also positive, and he noted that the basic orientation of Panić's programme was in line with the basic commitments of the DS.⁶⁰

In spite of his pledges to introduce policy changes that were broadly in line with those demanded by the UN and other international institutions, Panić's appointment did not elicit much of a response within the IC. A US State Department spokesperson commented that the US 'does not endorse, or support or have any views about him serving as Prime Minister.'⁶¹ Following a meeting with Panić in July, James Baker noted that Panić was in agreement with the US in relation to the importance of complying with UN resolutions and that the US did not question Panić's motives, which Baker described as 'noble'. He did, however, express doubts regarding how effective Panić would be.⁶² Dimitrijević and Pejić argue that both the IC and domestic political actors were slow to recognise that Panić was anything more than a tool of the Milošević regime, noting that 'it took some time ... to distinguish between the federal government and the government of Serbia. ... Support for Panić by the anti-Milošević opposition in Serbia was reserved, and pressure from abroad on Panić was as strong as it would have been on Milošević' (Dimitrijević and Pejić, 1992: 2).

⁵⁸ Tanjug, 15 July 1992 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1435/C1/1, 17 July 1992.

⁵⁹ Tanjug, 17 July 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1437/C1/1, 20 July 1992.

⁶⁰ Tanjug, 16 July 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1438/C1/1, 21 July 1992. Panić also secured approval for his efforts to bring about democratic change in Serbia from the Belgrade University students who had been striking (Tanjug, 9 July 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1429/C1/6, 11 July 1992).

⁶¹ US Department of State Daily Briefing #101, 2 July 1992.

⁶² Federal News Service, State Department Briefing, 10 July 1992.

Following his formal election in mid-July, Panić set about trying to implement his programme and to improve the image and international position of the SRJ.⁶³ He met with leaders of other former Yugoslav republics, travelling to Sarajevo to visit Izetbegović within days of his appointment,⁶⁴ and Panić also met briefly with Franjo Tuđman in Helsinki. In addition, Panić repeatedly reiterated his position that the SRJ was prepared to recognise the borders of the former-Yugoslav republics, and officially recognised Slovenia on 12 August.⁶⁵ Many of Panić's pronouncements and programmes put him at odds with the Milošević regime and its supporters, a conflict that came to a head at the London Conference in late August 1992.

The London Conference

In a letter to the UN Security Council Panić again expressed his willingness to recognise the former Yugoslav republics and stated that Yugoslavia had 'no territorial pretensions towards its neighbours,'⁶⁶ and on 21 August, in advance of his departure for the London Conference, Panić reiterated this point in an address to the Federal Parliament in which he outlined the steps that had been taken in order to meet the SRJ's obligations

⁶³On 21 August Panić announced that he had already visited 16 countries and met 'over 50 eminent world figures' (Radio Belgrade, 21 August 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1467/C1/1, 24 August 1992).

⁶⁴During his visit to Sarajevo, Panić made a speech in which he condemned 'cheap politicians who have played on nationalism and created a civil war', in what Thomas describes as a 'thinly-veiled criticism of Slobodan Milošević' (Thomas, 1999: 123).

⁶⁵Tanjug, 17 August 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1463/C1/1, 19 August 1992. Panić also took action to deal with the issue of national minorities within Serbia, establishing a Ministry for Human and Minority Rights (Tanjug, 4 August 1992 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1452/C1/1, 6 August 1992). He also took steps aimed at the reintroduction of Albanian language schooling in Kosovo and instructed the SRJ Justice Ministry to bring Kosovo's legal system fully into line with CSCE norms in relation to human rights. In addition, he appealed to the CSCE to help facilitate talks between the SRJ government and Kosovo Albanian representatives (Tanjug, 20 August 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1466/C1/1, 22 August 1992).

⁶⁶Tanjug, 17 August 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1463/C1/1, 19 August 1992.

to the Security Council.⁶⁷ The federal parliament, however, attempted to limit Panić's room to manoeuvre in London when it adopted a six-point platform for the conference which was more uncompromising than Panić was prepared to be regarding the recognition of the former Yugoslav republics, the issue of the continuity of the SFRJ and the possibility of international mediation in Kosovo.⁶⁸ The final point in the six-point declaration, described by Anastasijević as 'a thinly veiled threat to oust Panić's government if it agreed to any settlement that did not meet the five other "recommendations,"'⁶⁹ asserted that any major departure from the adopted political platform would have 'constitutional and legal consequences.'⁷⁰

The London Conference brought the battle between Panić and Milošević into the open, and the fallout of this struggle between the two leaders would have serious consequences for Panić when he returned to Belgrade. The tension between Panić and Milošević was evident when at one point Panić told the conference that Milošević was not authorised to speak, and at another point held up a piece of paper in front of

⁶⁷ Radio Belgrade, 21 August 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1467/C1/1, 24 August 1992. Panić also foreshadowed his showdown with Milošević when he stated that: 'I have already let it be known that the conduct of Yugoslavia's foreign policy is the responsibility of my government and of myself as the Prime Minister. Nobody else can speak with more authority than me or my government on behalf of Yugoslavia on occasions when Yugoslavia is represented internationally'.

⁶⁸ The Assembly declaration stated that Bosnia could only be recognised 'subject to an agreement on borders', and that Croatia could be recognised only 'within the borders which are not under UNPROFOR protection. As far as the territory under UNPROFOR protection is concerned the [SRJ] will accept whichever political solution is reached with the consent of the Serbian people in the Krajinas'. In addition, the declaration stated that the SRJ delegation should 'insist upon the continuity of Yugoslavia', did not allow for international mediation in Kosovo, and stated that the issue of Prevlaka, 'to which the Republic of Croatia lays legally untenable claims', should be raised at the conference (Tanjug, 21 August 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1467/C1/1, 24 August 1992).

⁶⁹ United Press International, 21 August 1992.

⁷⁰ Tanjug, 21 August 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1467/C1/1, 24 August 1992.

Milošević with the words 'shut up' written on them as Milošević was asking to speak⁷¹ (Silber & Little, 1996: 260).

At the London Conference it was agreed that sanctions against Serbia would be tightened, though no new sanctions were imposed, and that international monitors would be placed along Yugoslavia's borders and on the Danube, though not on its border with Bosnia.⁷² The conference also established the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia (ICFY) as a negotiating framework based in Geneva, with further negotiations scheduled to begin on 3 September.⁷³ The outcome of the London Conference also included a set of 'peace principles' which included the rejection of violence; respect for human and minority rights; an agreement that any settlement of the Yugoslav crisis must include the recognition of Bosnia as an independent state by all former Yugoslav republics; and respect for all current borders unless changes were agreed through negotiations, all of which were agreed to by Panić. The conference also called for the sending of human rights observers to Kosovo and other parts of Serbia with significant ethnic minorities. While Milošević refused to accept the presence of

⁷¹ Panić also issued warnings to Milošević after the conference, stating that he was 'satisfied that Mr. Milošević has privately supported my programme. I now want to give him a public warning. Actions are important, not words. This peace proposal is now an official peace plan for the [SRJ]. I expect Mr. Milošević to comply – or else ... If the President of Serbia fails to fulfil his promise, I will consider it my duty to demand his resignation' (Tanjug, 28 August 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1473/C1/1, 31 August 1992).

⁷² The London Conference was held in the wake of highly publicised accounts of atrocities committed in Serb detention camps in Bosnia and in this atmosphere Serbia and the Bosnian Serbs were widely condemned by most participants at the conference, with German foreign minister Klaus Kinkel going so far as to accuse the Serbs of genocide (DDP news agency, 26 August 1992 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1471/C2/1, 28 August 1992).

⁷³ Other agreements made at the London Conference included an agreement that the Bosnian Serb heavy weapons around Sarajevo and other Bosnian towns would be placed under UN control; that thousands more peacekeepers would be deployed to protect humanitarian aid convoys; and that the UN Security Council would create a new peacekeeping force. On 14 September 1992, the Security Council passed Resolution 776 establishing UNPROFOR II. The conference participants also agreed to consider establishing a no-fly zone over Bosnia (Silber & Little, 1996: 260-261).

international observers in Kosovo, Panić approved the despatch of a CSCE mission to the province, which Milošević would expel in 1993 (Silber & Little, 1996: 261).

The IC assessed Panić's participation at the London conference, and his efforts to bring peace to the former Yugoslavia, in a generally positive light, though there were doubts as to whether he had the power to deliver on his promises. The letter Panić sent to the UN Secretary General in advance of the conference was well received, with John Major commenting that it 'struck a note of realism and moderation.'⁷⁴ In addition to the positive assessments from the IC, most opposition political actors within Serbia also considered the conference to have been a success. Panić himself stated that he believed that it represented a breakthrough towards peace in the former Yugoslavia, and claimed that many countries had begun to show understanding for the positions of his government, and recognised him as the 'new leader' of Yugoslavia,⁷⁵ while Ćosić said he felt more optimistic following the conference.⁷⁶ Djindjić assessed that the conference had been 'relatively successful,'⁷⁷ while Drašković praised Panić's contribution stating that the outcome 'would have been far more difficult for us, had it not been for Milan Panić's

⁷⁴ IPS-Inter Press Service, 26 August 1992. The conference produced a 'Co-Chairmen's Paper On Serbia and Montenegro' which included the following: 'If as suggested by Mr. Panić's recent letter to the President of the Security Council of the UN, Serbia and Montenegro do intend to fulfil these obligations in deed as well as word they will resume a respected position in the international community. They will be enabled to trade, to receive assistance and to enjoy the full cooperation of all members of the international community. If they do not comply the Security Council will be invited to apply stringent sanctions leading to their total international isolation' (US Department of State Dispatch Supplement, Vol. 3, No. 7).

⁷⁵ Tanjug, 28 August 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1473/C1/1, 31 August 1992; Tanjug, 29 August 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1473/C1/1, 31 August 1992.

⁷⁶ Tanjug, 28 August 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1473/C1/1, 31 August 1992.

⁷⁷ United Press International, 28 August 1992.

exceptional diplomatic activity and reasonable behaviour on the international stage.’⁷⁸

Although the democratic opposition parties were generally positive in their assessment of the London Conference and Panić’s role in it, this was not the case for Milošević’s allies, the SRS, nor for some of the parliamentary representatives from within the SPS. Upon his return from the conference Panić found himself and his performance at the conference as the subject of a confidence debate in the federal parliament which represented the beginning of a phase in which Milošević and his allies consistently attempted to undermine Panić, and ultimately to successfully remove him from his position as Yugoslav prime minister. These events will be considered in greater detail in the section dealing with the December 1992 elections.

Following the London Conference Panić and Ćosić co-operated with Vance and Owen in their attempts to resolve the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia and on 30 September Ćosić and Tudjman signed a joint declaration reaffirming commitments made at the London Conference.⁷⁹ This was followed on 20 October by another joint declaration between the SRJ and Croatia which again reaffirmed earlier commitments and provided for the re-opening of the Belgrade to Zagreb road and the establishment of liaison offices in Belgrade and Zagreb as part of their efforts to normalise relations

⁷⁸ Radio Belgrade, 2 September 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1477/C1/1, 4 September 1992. An exception to these positive assessments was the position taken by Pešić who had opposed the conference from the outset and participated in an ‘alternative conference’ that was organised in London by opposition politicians from all parts of the former Yugoslavia. Pešić warned that carving up Bosnia into ethnic cantons would be detrimental to the cause of peace: ‘We should preserve Bosnia and recognise the borders that are there now. If we recognise changes or borders, the war will not stop but will spread’ (*The Guardian*, 27 August 1992).

⁷⁹ These included a commitment to the demilitarisation of Prevlaka and the stationing of UN observers there by 20 October, and to establishing a mechanism to facilitate the return of displaced persons to their homes (Tanjug, 1 October 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1501/C1/1, 3 October 1992). Subsequently, the Serbian government, in an effort to undermine Panić, refused to take part in talks with Croatia and accused the federal government of betraying the Croatian Serb (*The Financial Times*, 13 October 1992).

between the two countries.⁸⁰ However, in spite of this progress, limited though it might have been, the IC decided to increase Serbia's isolation further in the following months by strengthening the sanctions and excluding the SRJ from the UN; a move that led to an intensification of the conflict between Panić and the Milošević regime.

As noted in chapter one, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 777 in September 1992 denying the SRJ the right to continue to occupy the seat of the SFRJ in the UN, following which, on 22 September, the General Assembly voted to expel the SRJ. This decision was made in spite of an appeal by Panić to allow his country to remain within the UN. Panić argued that expelling the SRJ would undermine him in his struggle against Milošević and his hard-line allies who thrived on isolation.⁸¹

When it became clear to Panić that there would be a vote on the issue, he announced that he was going to propose that the federal government take a decision to apply for membership in the UN and other international organisations.⁸² The issue of the possible exclusion of the SRJ from the UN, and of Panić's proposal proved to be contentious within Serbia. Panić's statement prompted a backlash among his opponents, with SPS President Borisav Jović threatening to call a vote of no confidence in Panić's premiership.⁸³ In addition, the Serbian government issued a statement challenging the

⁸⁰ *The New York Times*, 21 October 1992. On 25 October, Croatian Serb nationalists blocked the reopening of the road in a move that many suspected was encouraged or supported by Milošević (*The New York Times*, 26 October 1992).

⁸¹ The Associated Press, 22 September 1992

⁸² United Press International, 17 September 1992

⁸³ United Press International, 17 September 1992

legality of Panić's move.⁸⁴

While there was much criticism of Panić's statement from Milošević and his allies, many within the democratic opposition took a more pragmatic approach. Drašković stated that Panić merely wanted 'something that reflects sheer political reality', and announced his support for Panić's move because 'this is the only way to stop the downfall of our people.'⁸⁵ The DSS also expressed support for Panić stating that he had 'been compelled to make such a move, a move which is possibly not a most fortunate one,' and went on to condemn the Serbian government's statement as an attempt 'to avoid their own responsibility.'⁸⁶ Similarly, Mićunović did not condemn Panić either, noting that the most important thing was that the SRJ remain a member of the UN. According to Mićunović, if the SRJ were expelled, 'it would be prudent for us to go and apply for membership ... We should issue a statement in which we state that we do not insist on succession as such, but that we insist on remaining a member.'⁸⁷ Mićunović did, however, express surprise that some within the IC wanted to see the SRJ excluded from the UN, stating that 'we expected that after the London Conference some agreement

⁸⁴ The statement declared that it was the SRJ parliament, not its government, that made decisions on joining international organisations, and that furthermore, the SRJ parliament could not make such a decision as it would breach the SRJ constitution, which 'explicitly establishes a continuity in the subjectivity of Yugoslavia.' Radio Belgrade, 17 September 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1490/C1/1, 19 September 1992. The Serbian government statement goes on to state that, given the EU conditions for international recognition, the recognition of the SRJ would 'demand the prior fulfilment of unacceptable conditions – special status for Kosovo-Metohija, Vojvodina, Sandžak, the part of Montenegro settled by the Muslims and the Albanians, and probably for the territory populated by the Bulgarian ethnic minority, together with a real threat of demilitarising these regions with the aim of reducing Serbia to the borders prior to the Balkan Wars'.

⁸⁵ Belgrade TV, 17 September 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1493/C1/1, 23 September 1992.

⁸⁶ Tanjug, 18 September 1992 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1493/C1/1, 23 September 1992.

⁸⁷ Belgrade TV, 17 September 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1493/C1/1, 23 September 1992. Djindjić also took a pragmatic approach stating that 'the Federal government must do everything for the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to survive in the United Nations or to apply for admission' (Tanjug, 18 September 1992 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1493/C1/1, 23 September 1992).

would be reached and that Panić's government would be given a chance to do something serious for peace.'⁸⁸

The December 1992 elections

In October 1992 it was announced that elections would take place on 20 December for both the Serbian parliament and the Yugoslav Chamber of Deputies. However, when the elections were announced it was not certain that the opposition parties would participate, as they were dissatisfied with the conditions in which they would have to contest them, and this issue revealed serious tensions between the opposition parties. Panić, convinced that a united opposition would stand a greater chance of defeating the SPS, played an important role in attempting to foster opposition unity. However, in spite of Panić's attempts to unite the opposition, including the creation of a short-lived coalition that included DEPOS, the DS, and the GSS, on 16 November it was announced that the opposition would present a united front at the elections, but with two separate election lists, one being centred around DEPOS, and the other around the DS.⁸⁹

Although he had started out as an ally of Milošević, by the end of 1992 Dobrica Ćosić was openly critical of the Serbian president and spoke out in support of Milan Panić and the federal government. When, in late November, as expected, the SPS announced that Milošević would be its candidate for the Serbian presidency, the opposition had wanted Ćosić to stand as a candidate for the united opposition. Ćosić,

⁸⁸ Belgrade TV, 17 September 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1493/C1/1, 23 September 1992.

⁸⁹ Tanjug, 16 November 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1541/C1/1, 18 November 1992. While tensions arose within DEPOS regarding whether the coalition should contest the election, with the DSS being opposed to participation while the SPO favoured it, at a DEPOS of the coalition's ruling council in November narrowly voted in favour of participation (Tanjug, 18 November 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1542/C1/1, 19 November 1992).

however, ruled himself out. In addition to suffering from health problems, Ćosić claimed that if he were to stand he would have to resign his post as federal president.⁹⁰ Ćosić also failed to endorse any of the parties contesting the elections.⁹¹

With Ćosić having ruled himself out, on 30 November Panić announced that he would stand against Milošević.⁹² This was followed by pledges of support from all the democratic opposition parties including Drašković, who had been nominated himself, but who promised to withdraw if Panić's candidacy was accepted by the republican electoral commission.⁹³ However, Panić's candidacy was called into question when the electoral commission ruled that, as a result of a law which had been passed only a couple of weeks earlier, Panić was ineligible to stand for the Serbian presidency as he had not been resident in the republic for twelve months. Amid threats of an opposition electoral boycott, a legal battle ensued with Panić appealing to the constitutional court, which overturned the decision, only to have the electoral commission again reject his candidacy. It was not until 9 December, less than two weeks before the election was due to be held, that the constitutional court again overturned the electoral commission's ruling and Panić was eventually allowed to stand (Thomas, 1999: 128). While there was no sustained international criticism of the Serbian authorities for these attempts to remove Panić, the

⁹⁰ Tanjug, 21 November 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1546/C1/1, 24 November 1992

⁹¹ Ćosić claimed that that 'my desire to be the President of all the citizens of Serbia and Montenegro without separating them into parties, prevents me from naming the party and those people who are closest to my beliefs.' (Tanjug, 21 November 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1546/C1/1, 24 November 1992).

⁹² Panić's announcement came after Belgrade University students submitted in excess of the 10,000 signatures in support of his candidacy to the Serbian electoral commission, and nominated him as a presidential candidate (The Press Association, 29 November 1992).

⁹³ Radio Belgrade, 1 December 1992 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/15541, 3 December 1992.

State Department noted that these efforts were seen as 'part of a pattern of actions which could preclude the possibility that free and fair elections could be held.'⁹⁴

Milošević attempted to weaken Panić in advance of the elections, with several Milošević loyalists within the federal government resigning their posts as part of an effort to undermine Panić's government.⁹⁵ The reasons given by the ministers for their resignations generally involved Panić's alleged 'anti-Serbian' policies,⁹⁶ allowing 'foreign powers dominate the government's policy,'⁹⁷ and similar charges. Furthermore, there were also several attempts to remove Panić through no confidence votes in the federal parliament, which he survived largely due to the support of the Montenegrin representatives. The first of these occurred immediately after the London Conference, when the SRS tabled a motion of no confidence in the prime minister on the grounds that he had disregarded the conclusions of the federal assembly while he was attending the conference.⁹⁸ Drašković spoke out in favour of Panić and called on people to demonstrate in support of him.⁹⁹ Mićunović also criticised the confidence motion,¹⁰⁰ as did the DSS¹⁰¹ and Ćosić.¹⁰² Panić survived the confidence vote because Milošević did not intend to have him removed at this point and the SPS urged its members to support him in the vote.¹⁰³ A second vote of no confidence in Panić took place in early November. The motion had been proposed by the SRS on 16 October when Panić was accused of having

⁹⁴ US Department of State Daily Briefing # 176, 3 December 1992.

⁹⁵ Federal foreign minister Vladislav Jovanović has resigned in September, while minister without portfolio Radmila Milentijević resigned on 28 November, economy minister Nikola Šainović resigned on 29 November and deputy prime minister Oskar Kovač resigned on 30 November.

⁹⁶ United Press International, 10 September 1992; United Press International, 28 November 1992.

⁹⁷ United Press International, 29 November 1992.

⁹⁸ *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1474/i, 1 September 1992.

⁹⁹ Radio Belgrade, 2 September 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1477/C1/1, 4 September 1992.

¹⁰⁰ Tanjug, 1 September 1992 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1476/C1/1, 3 September 1992.

¹⁰¹ Tanjug, 1 September 1992 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1476/C1/1, 3 September 1992.

¹⁰² Tanjug, 2 September 1992 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1477/C1/1, 4 September 1992.

¹⁰³ Tanjug, 2 September 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1477/C1/1, 4 September 1992.

‘breached the decisions of the Federal parliament, assisted the enemies of the Serbian people and threatened the basic interests of the state.’¹⁰⁴ This time the SPS supported the motion¹⁰⁵ but Panić survived, by one vote, thanks to Montenegrin representatives in the Chamber of Republics.¹⁰⁶

While the IC had remained largely silent on the issue of the upcoming elections, there was a limited international reaction to the moves against Panić. Following the attacks on the federal prime minister on the grounds of his behaviour at the London Conference, Cyrus Vance, the UN’s representative in the ICFY, spoke in support of Panić. When asked if Panić’s removal would make the peace process more difficult Vance stated that it would, praising the ‘constructive suggestions’ that Panić had made and asserting that ‘he ought to stay and see what can be done to build on some of those suggestions.’¹⁰⁷ However, this clearly did not represent unequivocal support for Panić from the US, as when asked whether or not he had any comment on the issue, a State Department spokesperson stated that he had nothing to say.¹⁰⁸

The December 1992 election campaign: ‘Patriots vs Traitors’

Throughout the election campaign, Milošević and the SPS emphasised their patriotic credentials (Andrejevich, 1993: 16; Thomas, 1999: 131). In contrast, both Panić and the main democratic opposition parties ran elections campaigns that were

¹⁰⁴ Tanjug, 16 October 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1515/C1/1, 19 October 1992.

¹⁰⁵ Tanjug, 2 November 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1529/C1/1, 4 November 1992.

¹⁰⁶ The Associated Press, 3 November 1992.

¹⁰⁷ The MacNeil/Lehrer News Hour (transcript), 1 September 1992.

¹⁰⁸ US Department of State Daily Briefing #121, 2 September 1992.

significantly more moderate on national issues.¹⁰⁹ The approach of DEPOS and the DS to the elections was based on a promise of peace and the lifting of international sanctions against Serbia (Mihailović, 1997: 53; Thomas, 1999: 131). The core of Panić's campaign for the Serbian presidency was a pledge to end the war in Bosnia and to get the sanctions against Serbia lifted (Andrejevich, 1993: 14). On the domestic front his key pledges were economic and democratic reform (Goati, 2001a: 100). Speaking when he formally announced that he would stand against Milošević, Panić noted the dire state of the Serbian economy and Milošević's inaction in relation to such issues, calling on Serbs 'to vote for peace and economic revival.'¹¹⁰

Once the elections were announced there was an acknowledgement on the part of the State Department that they were unlikely to be free and fair and an indication of support for the opposition's demands with respect to electoral conditions. According to a spokesperson, the Belgrade authorities had a responsibility to ensure that 'the elections adhere to internationally accepted standards,' with the opposition parties having equal access to the media and adequate resources to conduct their campaign, and that the voting should be 'conducted according to international norms.'¹¹¹

There was little international response to Panić's announcement that he would oppose Milošević in the December elections, and no significant international actors explicitly endorsed his candidature, though there were some suggestions of support. In response to a question as to whether the US would prefer a victory for Milošević or

¹⁰⁹ Goati notes that the national issue was the subject of 43% of SRS slogans, 22% of SPS slogans and only 17% of DEPOS slogans (Goati, 2001a: 70).

¹¹⁰ United Press International, 1 December 1992.

¹¹¹ US Department of State Daily Briefing # 175, 2 December 1992. Expressing concern regarding whether such conditions would be met, the spokesperson went on to state that 'Initial reports regarding media access and regulations governing the electoral process give reason for scepticism that the process will be free and fair.'

Panić, State Department spokesperson Richard Boucher declared that the US was not concerned about individuals but policies, and a 'change in those policies that would be brought about by Mr. Panić or any other candidate through a democratic process would be a welcome development. ... But we don't endorse particular candidates.'¹¹²

In addition to the suggestions of support for Panić that came from the US, the EC also implied support for Panić, though fell short of explicitly endorsing his candidature. In a statement issued by the European Council in December it was implied that should there be a change of government in Serbia that this could lead to lifting the sanctions.¹¹³ Further implied support for Panić also came from the CSCE which issued a statement expressing support for 'the efforts of those political forces in Serbia that are striving to bring about full co-operation with the peace process.'¹¹⁴ In addition a joint US-Russian statement issued on 14 December at the CSCE meeting explicitly noted the possibility of sanctions being removed. The statement declared that if the people of Serbia made the 'correct choice ... Russia and the United States pledge to work with the government of Serbia to restore its position in the world'. If this were followed by a fundamental change in policy 'the eventual relaxation and removal of the sanctions would be possible.'¹¹⁵

According to Owen some unnamed 'US supporters of Panić' were pressurising himself and Vance to speak out in favour of Panić. Owen however, states that he believed

¹¹² US Department of State Daily Briefing #175, 2 December 1992.

¹¹³ European Council in Edinburgh – 11 and 12 December 1992 – Conclusions of the Presidency. According to the statement: If there is a radical change of policy and genuine cooperation in the peace process, Serbia will be gradually readmitted to the international community. The European Council supports the efforts of those political forces who are trying to bring Serbia back from the brink. If, on the other hand, the Belgrade regime continues its present policies, the international community will take sterner action, including tightening and extending existing sanctions and preventing Serb participation in any international body, which will totally isolate Serbia for a long time to come.

¹¹⁴ CSCE, Summary of Conclusions Decision on Peaceful Settlement of Disputes, Stockholm 1992.

¹¹⁵ US Department of State Dispatch, 28 December 1992. On the day of the election, both Bush and Major declined the opportunity to comment on the elections, with Major claiming that 'commenting on elections is a dangerous, hazardous business' (Public Papers of the Presidents, Pres. Doc. 2371, Remarks with Prime Minister John Major of the United Kingdom and an Exchange with Reporters,' 20 December 1992).

only Ćosić could have beaten Milošević, and that rather than explicitly endorse Panić they decided to issue a 'declaration that had been carefully designed to sound supportive of Panić – as we were – but to avoid attracting allegations of interference.' Owen goes on to state that both himself and Vance thought it 'wiser to keep our lines of communication open to all, including Milošević, and eschew any further involvement in the elections' (Owen, 1996: 82-83). While the above statements do indicate that the IC would have liked to see Panić defeat Milošević, there was however, no significant support given to the opposition for their campaign or even for Panić's presidential campaign. As Sekelj points out, in spite of the fact that Panić had 'advocated the fulfilment of the conditions posed by the international community' he nevertheless 'never secured any real support from the European Community or the United States' (Sekelj, 2000: 65).

While there may have been a degree of rhetorical support for Panić within the IC, his requests for direct assistance were largely unheeded. As the central message of his electoral campaign was the need for an end to Serbia's international isolation and its reintegration into the IC, he pleaded with IC representatives for sanctions to be lifted for a trial period of sixty days in order to demonstrate to the Serbian electorate that real benefits could follow should he win the election. Addressing the EC Parliament's foreign affairs and security committee in early November, Panić argued that the conflicts in Croatia and Bosnia could not be seen separately from the battle for democracy in the SRJ, warning that: 'If the forces of democracy lose this battle due to lack of understanding and support on the part of the West then the other, more visible battle, in villages and towns of Bosnia ... will most likely further intensify and spread until it covers the entire Balkan

peninsula.’¹¹⁶ Panić called on Europe to recognise the difference between those among the Bosnian Serb and Serbian leaderships that were engaging in war and conflict on the one hand, and those who were ‘trying to set Yugoslavia on a course of peace and democracy’ on the other.¹¹⁷ He asked that the sanctions be relaxed for a sixty day period for humanitarian reasons, to be reintroduced if the UN confirmed that the elections were not free and fair, and stated that ‘I’m convinced we can win, but not without your help and understanding.’ In addition to asking for the temporary relaxation of sanctions, Panić also asked for other assistance and requested a clear statement that the declared policy of the Yugoslav government met the criteria for official recognition; help from ‘experts and advisors’ to organise for elections and ‘to encourage our people to aspire to democratic changes;’ assistance for the non-state media to import paper and for the electronic media to increase its broadcasting range and possibilities.¹¹⁸

During the course of the election campaign, the IC did provide an element of support in terms of Panić’s specific requests. Monitors were sent to Serbia by the US based International Republican Institute, with the approval of the State Department, which also obtained an exemption from the UN Sanctions Committee in order to send broadcasting equipment to an independent television station based in Belgrade.¹¹⁹ However, with respect to Panić’s key request - the relaxation of sanctions - the IC not only refused to grant this request, but in fact tightened international sanctions against the SRJ on 17 November 1992 when Resolution 787 was passed by the UN Security Council. Owen appears to believe that some concession to Panić on the sanctions issue could have

¹¹⁶ Tanjug, 5 November 1992 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1532/A1, 7 November 1992.

¹¹⁷ Tanjug, 5 November 1992 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1532/A1, 7 November 1992.

¹¹⁸ Tanjug, 5 November 1992 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1532/A1, 7 November 1992.

¹¹⁹ *The Washington Post*, 26 November 1992.

been useful, stating that 'in ICFY we felt the rigidity of a Security Council that either could not see the merit of or could not deliver the diplomatic carrot which could be as valuable as the stick of sanctions' (Owen, 1996: 61). Dimitrijević and Pejić also note that this move was 'badly timed' (Dimitrijević and Pejić, 1992: 20).

Even those within Milošević's own party recognised the potential impact of such a move. Commenting on the IC's decision to strengthen sanctions at a time when Panić was trying to persuade the IC to suspend them in order to strengthen his chances against Milošević, Mihailo Marković of the SPS stated, 'Whatever we do, we are punished. This gives people reason to think that Milošević was right because Panić only got a tightening of sanctions. ... It will help Milošević win the election.'¹²⁰ Panić was similarly dismayed, and noted bitterly: 'If you had supported democratisation in Yugoslavia, rather than the sanctions, they would have been lifted by now ... But instead I received only further threats from your governments ... That is what I received from you, while some people here accused me of being your agent, a traitor, or spread other similar stupidities.'¹²¹

In summary, while the IC did imply a certain level of support for Panić's candidacy in the Serbian presidential elections, there is no evidence that international actors were considering the possibility of regime change at this time. In spite of the implied support for Panić, international policy remained focused on achieving IC goals through attempting to coerce the Milošević regime to induce a change in its behaviour, even when such policies acted to the detriment of Panić's campaign, as was the case with the tightening of UN sanctions in November 1992.

¹²⁰ Marković cited in Thomas, 1999: 130-131.

¹²¹ Tanjug, 19 December 1992, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1569/C1/1, 21 December 1992.

The results of the December 1992 elections were a disappointment for the democratic opposition parties. Milošević secured 55.9% of the vote in the presidential elections, significantly less than the 65.3% he had won in the 1990 presidential elections, to Panić's 34.3%, thus retaining the Serbian Presidency. In addition the SPS, remained the single largest party in both republican and federal parliaments, although its support had diminished considerably from the 46.1% it attained in 1990 (See Table 1). While DEPOS performed reasonably well, showing a slight increase from the 15.8% that the SPO had won in 1990, it came in third place to the SRS, which had not contested the 1990 elections.

	FEDERAL PARLIAMENT		REPUBLICAN PARLIAMENT	
	Share of vote	Seats	Share of vote	Seats
SPS	31.5%	47 (43.5%)	28.8%	101 (40.4%)
SRS	21.8%	30 (27.8%)	22.6%	73 (29.2%)
DEPOS	17.2%	20 (18.5%)	16.9%	50 (20%)
DS	6%	5 (4.6%)	4.2%	6 (2.4%)

Table 1: Results of the December 1992 elections held in Serbia for the Yugoslav Chamber of Citizens and the Serbian Parliament. (Figures from Goati et al, 1993: 200-204)

Although the SPS remained the single largest party following the 1992 elections, Goati points out that its results could not be considered to have been a great success as it showed that support for the party had dropped significantly since the first multiparty elections held in 1990 (Goati: 2001, 97). As a result, the SPS lost its majority in the Serbian parliament and needed the support of the SRS in order to form a government.

While the two parties did not enter into a formal coalition, the SRS was willing to provide support to an SPS government.

Following his defeat in the presidential elections, Panić's fate was sealed when he lost a confidence motion in the federal parliament on 29 December and was immediately replaced by Radoje Kontić. Although he had pledged to resign if reformists were not successful in the elections, Ćosić stayed in his position as Federal President and supported Kontić's instatement (Thomas, 1999: 143). However, following the removal of Panić, the Radicals soon turned their attention to Ćosić, who came increasingly under attack, and was eventually ousted at the end of May 1993.

Goati argues that the December 1992 elections were highly significant, marking a 'crucial "political crossroads"' in Serbia's and Yugoslavia's political life, as they represented a choice between international reintegration and continued international isolation and its devastating impact' (Goati, 2001a: 101). In his consideration of why Serbia's voters opted for the latter he raises two important points. Firstly, voters did not have access to the relevant information needed to make such a choice as the Serbian media presented a distorted image of Panić's programme and claimed that 'by compromising [Panić] has actually been challenging the independence and dignity of the country in favour of foreign powers, above all the USA' (Goati, 2001a: 101). In addition, Goati notes, there are good reason to doubt the validity of the results of these elections given the number of irregularities that occurred (Goati, 2001a: 102). While it is not known precisely to what extent electoral manipulation and fraud contributed to Milošević's victory over Panić, it is nevertheless worth noting that some commentators

have suggested that it was only through such manipulation that he retained his position as Serbia's president (Pavlović, 2001: 4; Ramet, 2002: 339).¹²²

Given the significance of the December 1992 elections, the strength of Panić's direct challenge to Milošević, and the relative unity of the opposition, some authors have seen this election as something of a missed opportunity for Serbia. Stojanović notes that:

DEPOS's success and that of Milan Panić ... showed that at that moment, up to the time of the outbreak of war in Bosnia and the imposition of sanctions against Serbia, there was perhaps space in Serbia to offer a programme founded on a completely different concept, but no one took the risk of "national betrayal" (Stojanović, 2000: 466).

While Stojanović seems to consider that it was the democratic opposition parties themselves that missed this crucial opportunity for change, Dragović-Soso believes that it was it was the IC. She argues that by focusing exclusively on coercion, the IC missed a chance 'to aid and advise the opposition to bring about regime change' (Dragović-Soso, 2003: 131).

In addition to factors such as the unfair electoral conditions in which the opposition had to operate, the likelihood of electoral fraud and the abuse of the state media to demonise opposition candidates, that characterised all elections considered in this research, analysts note several factors that contributed to the victory of Milošević and the SPS in the December 1992 elections. The dominance of the national question and the inability of the democratic opposition parties to formulate a significantly different

¹²² According to Ramet, Milošević won the election 'only by invalidating the registration of many voters, by orchestrating the slander of his rival in the regime press (while denying Panić the possibility of any reply), and even by holding up approval of Panić's candidacy until close to election day, thus preventing his rival from having air time until late in the race' (Ramet, 2002: 339).

solution to that offered by the SPS and the SRS is considered to be of primary significance by several authors (Goati, 2001a: 104; Slavujević, 1998: 98, Stojanović, 2000: 465). In addition, Sekelj notes the significance of an essentially 'unproportional election system' and the boycotting of the elections by Kosovo's ethnic Albanian population, noting that ten per cent of all MPs were elected by less than 100,000 Kosovo Serbs (Sekelj, 2000: 64).

However, it is the inability of the opposition to formulate a credible alternative to regime, in particular in relation to the national question, which dominates these analyses. Stojanović notes that although, through DEPOS, 'for the first time the opposition raised some existential social questions ... and it was clearly emphasized that Serbia could not be subordinated to 'peripheral parts of Serbdom' ... this was not sufficient to create an authentic opposition identity founded on a programme qualitatively different from that of the government' (Stojanović, 2000: 466). She goes on to point out that the 'programmes of the associated opposition parties who formed the coalition did not allow an essential withdrawal from the idea of uniting all Serbs' (Stojanović, 2000: 466). However, it is worth noting in the context of this research, that Goati states that the democratic opposition parties, and especially the SPO, were opposed to the forceful ethnic division of Bosnia and Croatia (Goati, 2001a: 103). Slavujević makes a similar point, noting that the dominance of the national question was detrimental to the democratic opposition, and arguing that the parties could not formulate an effective response to the central theme of the SPS and SRS campaigns and 'in fact almost ignored it'; this was particularly the case with respect to the DS who 'missed the main theme of the campaign' by focusing on economic issues (Slavujević, 1998: 98).

Goati asserts that the inability of the democratic opposition parties to provide an effective response to the national question was matched by its inability to present other issues, such as the need for democratic change, as being of equal significance, again emphasising the inability of the democratic opposition parties to provide a credible alternative to the Milošević regime.¹²³ (Goati, 2001a: 104). While the focus of the election was firmly on the national question, it seems clear that the opposition did not attempt to compete with the regime on this terrain, but chose to emphasise the need for democratic and economic reform. As such, it can be argued that while the opposition parties were attempting to maintain a zone of ideological autonomy through attempting to ensure that the failure of the regime's domestic policies appeared on the electoral agenda, this probably proved detrimental.

Conclusions

Differences between the democratic opposition parties and the Milošević regime

The issue that was of central concern to the IC in its dealings with Serbia during this time period was the conflict in Bosnia and Serbia's actions in support of the Bosnian Serbs. Serbia's internal politics were not considered to be of significant importance by

¹²³ Goati also argues that support for the idea of unity of all Serbs existed not only within the political elite, but was one that was prevalent among the supporters of the SPS, the SRS and DEPOS. Citing a survey of these parties' supporters carried out in October 1992, Goati notes that only 18.3% of SPS supporters, 21.4% of SRS supporters, and 28.1% of DEPOS supporters believed that there should be unconditional recognition of the internal borders of the former-Yugoslav republics as international borders (Goati, 2001a: 72). On the other hand, Dimitrijević and Pejić cite research on the linked issue of what type of support Serbia should offer to those Serbs living outside Serbia which showed that 51% believed that they should be 'politically supported and materially within the limits of [our] means', while only 2.6% believed that they should be supported 'in weapons and manpower'; this represented a significant decrease from 32.4% the previous November (Dimitrijević and Pejić, 1992: 12).

any international actors at this time, and the statements that were issued by those dealing with the crisis in the former Yugoslavia made no mention of the need for democratic reform in Serbia. Rather, the focus of all these statements was on the conflict in Bosnia and the humanitarian situation arising from that conflict. Where there were comments made on the situation inside Serbia these related to the rights of ethnic minorities and not to breaches of the civil rights of Serbia's population in terms of the undemocratic nature of the Milošević regime and its clear attempts to perpetrate electoral fraud and manipulation.

In terms of the differences between the democratic opposition parties and the Milošević regime, the opposition parties considered in this study did not support the creation of a greater Serbian state through the use of force, and as such held positions that were different to those of the Milošević regime on the issues that were of central concern to the IC. Outside of the parties' own pronouncements, evidence that they opposed the regime's policies can be seen in their expressions of support for Milan Panić and his government. The democratic opposition parties welcomed Panić's appointment as Yugoslav prime minister, supported his participation in the London Conference, and also supported his decision to apply for UN membership. While it could be argued that the parties considered here did not publicly advocate some of the more controversial positions taken by Panić, it is also true that there was no outright condemnation of his policies. In addition, Panić's performance at the London Conference, where he publicly stated his commitment to actions such as recognition of the other former-Yugoslav republics and the need to resolve the conflict in the former-Yugoslavia by peaceful means, was assessed positively by most of the democratic opposition. Although this does

not necessarily amount to a total endorsement of Panić's positions, it does imply a certain degree of support for Panić's approach, and perhaps a realisation that in order to reintegrate Serbia into the IC such steps would be necessary, if not wholly welcomed. As such, the democratic opposition parties did present a credible alternative partner for the IC.

The relationship between the IC and the democratic opposition parties

While some members of the democratic opposition parties did have contact with IC representatives during the time period considered here, for example Mićunović's visit to the US to discuss his proposals for a peace conference where he met with US and UN officials including Cyrus Vance, Lawrence Eagleburger and Boutros Boutros-Ghali,¹²⁴ there appears to have been little sustained or regular contact between the two during this time period and no formal links, although there was extensive contact between Panić and international representatives resulting from Panić's status as federal prime minister. That Panić held positions that were different from those of the Milošević regime does appear to have been acknowledged by IC representatives by the time of the December elections, and his candidacy for the Serbian presidency did receive some implicit support, though in general the IC did not endorse his candidacy or his call for the suspension of sanctions and did not openly call for Milošević's removal. Rather, there seems to have been a reluctance among some elements of the IC to alienate Milošević by calling for his removal. This reflects an unwillingness to become involved in Serbia's internal politics and a general lack of confidence in Panić's ability to implement the policies that he and

¹²⁴ Tanjug, 15 July 1992 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1436/C1/1, 18 July 1992.

his government formulated. With regard to the democratic opposition parties themselves, the IC did not clearly acknowledge the differences between their positions and those of the Milošević regime, and does not appear to have paid them any significant degree of attention, except insofar as they were associated with Panić.

The campaigns mounted by the democratic opposition parties during this time period received little international support, either direct or implied. While there were acknowledgements on the part of the IC that neither the May 1992 nor the December 1992 elections could be considered to be free, fair and democratic, there had been no declarations of support for the opposition's attempts to negotiate fair electoral conditions during the round table talks that were held at both republican and federal levels. Neither were there any significant IC comments on the need for democratic reforms in Serbia at this time that could be construed as implied support for the opposition's demands. Furthermore, the demand for Milošević's resignation, made at the time of the Vidovdan Sabor, was not endorsed by any significant international actors. Thus, the minor concessions gained by the democratic opposition during this time period were secured solely through the parties' own efforts. That the Milošević regime was under significant pressure from the opposition parties during this time period is clear from that fact that Milošević did make concessions to the demands of his opponents throughout the second half of 1992.

While the democratic opposition did not receive international support for its attempts to ensure fair conditions for future elections, once these elections were announced, the IC did express a degree of support for the democratic opposition and for Panić's attempt to defeat Milošević in the elections for the Serbian presidency. While this

did not amount to an explicit endorsement of Panić's candidacy, there is evidence of implied support, in particular from David Owen and Cyrus Vance of the ICFY. However, in spite of this, Panić's request for assistance in the form of a suspension of UN sanctions in advance of the elections was refused, and sanctions were tightened at this time; a move which undermined Panić in his attempts to defeat Milošević.

In terms of how the democratic opposition parties viewed the IC and its actions during this time period, while there was criticism of a number of policies and decisions, there is no evidence of any sustained anti-Westernism or anti-Western rhetoric on the part of the parties considered in this research. Furthermore, while the opposition did object to the sanctions that were imposed against Serbia, most of their criticism was directed at the Milošević regime and it was the regime rather than the IC that was blamed for Serbia's international isolation. Indeed, the opposition used the imposition of sanctions to bolster calls for Milošević's resignation, and Drašković, at least initially, even appeared to welcome them. Where the democratic opposition parties were critical of the sanctions this was because the sanctions were viewed as something that would cause harm and suffering to the Serbian population rather than the Milošević regime, and also because other former Yugoslav republics, in particular Croatia, were not subjected to similar measures for their actions in the Bosnian conflict.

It needs to be noted that while Panić appealed to the IC for support for his campaign against Milošević in December 1992, the democratic opposition parties themselves do not seem to have paid significant attention to securing international support. In addition, while there is some evidence that the democratic opposition parties were disappointed with the level of international support for Panić's campaign, this was

not a significant theme in opposition discourse at this time. Panić himself was considerably more vocal on this issue than were the democratic opposition parties. Furthermore, there is little evidence that the democratic opposition parties blamed international factors for their failure to defeat Milošević at this time.

The impact of international policy on the effectiveness of the democratic opposition parties

As noted above, the inability of the democratic opposition parties to present a credible alternative to the Milošević regime domestically, particularly with regard to the Serbian national question, has been identified as its most significant weakness in the December 1992 election campaign. As such, the democratic opposition parties failed to carry out one of the tasks necessary to effectively oppose the regime outlined in chapter one (resisting integration; maintaining a zone of ideological autonomy; questioning the legitimacy of the regime and raising the costs of authoritarian rule; and presenting a credible alternative domestically and internationally). While the opposition parties emphasised the need for political and economic reform in their election campaigns, Milošević's ability to control the agenda ensured that the national question dominated, and the IC and its policies facilitated Milošević's exploitation of this issue giving him a distinct advantage over his opponents through narrowing the political space in which the opposition could operate. Furthermore, specific IC actions in the period before the December elections made the task of the democratic opposition more difficult. In particular, the decision to tighten UN sanctions at a time when Panić was asking for them

to be suspended worked to the advantage of the Milošević regime, while the decision to exclude the SRJ from UN membership and Panić's announcement that the SRJ should apply for membership, were exploited by Panić's opponents and used to discredit and undermine him. These events suggest that international policy does seem to have undermined the opposition's ability to present a credible alternative to the Milošević regime, and also to maintain a zone of ideological autonomy. As such, international policy undermined the ability of the opposition to two of tasks necessary to effectively oppose the regime. It is worth noting that this occurred at time when the democratic opposition parties could be considered to have represented a credible alternative to the Milošević regime at the international level, though there is no evidence that the democratic opposition parties were attempting to secure international support at this time. However, the regime's efforts to ensure that the national question remained the dominant issue in Serbian politics at this time resulted in a significant degree of nationalist sentiment among the Serbian population, and support for policies that attempted to forge a common Serb state out of the Serb populated areas of the former Yugoslavia. In such an atmosphere, presenting a credible alternative at the international level was probably incompatible with presenting a credible alternative at the domestic level.

In terms of carrying out the other tasks of a democratic opposition, all the parties considered here successfully resisted integration, with none offering either tacit or explicit support to the regime. The opposition parties also performed reasonably well in terms of the linked tasks of disputing the legitimacy of the regime and raising the costs of authoritarian rule. The opposition's initial reaction to the imposition of UN sanctions was to blame Milošević and his associates for Serbia's predicament thereby highlighting the

costs of his rule. In addition, the opposition parties clearly disputed the legitimacy of the regime when it boycotted the May 1992 elections, and also through the holding of public demonstrations in May and June 1992 and the calls for fair electoral conditions. Evidence of the opposition's success in pressuring the regime through these activities is the concessions that they gained, which while significant were insufficient to ensure that the December elections would be free and fair.

While the democratic opposition parties enjoyed some success in their efforts to dispute the regime's legitimacy, this does not appear to have been acknowledged by the IC. In spite of the fact that Milošević was already under a certain amount of pressure internally, the lack of IC support for the opposition's demands regarding fair electoral conditions enabled Milošević to make only limited concessions to the democratic opposition parties, certain that there would be no international outcry regarding electoral theft or manipulation. In spite of widespread acknowledgement that the elections were unfair, and the analysis of some commentators suggesting that only through manipulation was Milošević able to retain power, there was no international condemnation. Taken together these factors suggest that the IC, through failing to support the democratic opposition parties in their efforts to ensure fair electoral conditions, did to some extent undermine the efforts of the democratic opposition to dispute the legitimacy of the regime and raise the costs of authoritarian rule. This general lack of international support for Serbia's democratic opposition indicates that at this time regime change in Serbia was not being considered by the IC. However, as Stepan notes, efforts to dispute the legitimacy of an authoritarian regime must also be directed at the IC (Stepan, 2001: 163), but there is little evidence that the democratic opposition parties actively sought

international support for their campaigns in 1992 and there is little evidence that the democratic opposition parties sought international support to pressurise Milošević to reform the electoral laws that disadvantaged the democratic opposition parties in the December 1992 elections.

While it is impossible to know for sure whether more sustained international support for the opposition might have led to a different outcome in the December 1992 elections, what can be said for certain is that the IC had no strategy for supporting the democratic opposition as an alternative government at this time. The December 1992 elections represented one of the most significant challenges to the regime throughout the entire time period covered in this research. Although the opposition was divided to a certain extent, with the DS remaining outside the DEPOS coalition in addition to tension between those parties within DEPOS, the democratic opposition parties were, nevertheless, united in their support for Panić's direct challenge to Milošević in the Serbian presidential election. This level of unity in support of a challenge to the Milošević regime would not be repeated again, even in the September 2000 elections in which the SPO remained outside the DOS coalition and failed to support Koštunica's candidacy for the Yugoslav presidency.

Chapter 4: Bosnia

This case study begins in the spring of 1993 and continues until UN sanctions were indefinitely suspended following the signing of the Dayton peace agreement in November 1995. Although the sanctions were not terminated until after the first post-war elections were held in Bosnia in 1996, the indefinite suspension of sanctions that occurred in 1995 effectively brought to an end the period of international isolation to which Serbia had been subjected during the years of the Bosnian war. While Serbia began this time period subject to a high degree of international isolation, this began to change in 1994 when Milošević decided to co-operate with international efforts to bring the war in Bosnia to an end. International efforts to resolve the conflict led to the formulation of a series of peace plans, the most significant of which were the Vance-Owen peace plan (VOPP), the Contact Group peace plan and the Dayton agreement. These proved to be highly controversial within Serbia and led to significant divisions between the democratic opposition parties, in addition to causing a rift between the SPS and the SRS which led Milošević to dissolve the Serbian parliament and call elections in December 1993. In addition to the various peace plans that were proposed by the IC, its efforts to deal with the Bosnian conflict also involved the use of NATO air strikes against the Bosnian Serbs in September 1995, and this also caused controversy within Serbia.

With the war in Bosnia and the international response to it dominating the political agenda in Serbia throughout this time period, the democratic opposition parties made only two major challenges to the Milošević regime. These were a campaign to secure the release from custody of Vuk Drašković who was arrested and detained in June

1993, and elections for the Serbian parliament in December 1993. The campaign to secure Drašković's release marks the first time between 1992 and 2000 that the IC openly and explicitly supported the democratic opposition in a campaign against the Milošević regime. Furthermore, international engagement was a key factor in the success of that campaign. As such, this case study provides the opportunity to examine the relationship between the IC and democratic opposition parties at a time when, albeit in relation to only one issue, they were pursuing the same goals and to examine whether this had any impact on relations between the opposition parties and the IC. The first half of this chapter will look at the issues that were of central concern to the IC in this time period, and the attitudes and positions of the democratic opposition parties to these issues. The second half of the chapter will examine the two major opposition challenges to the Milošević regime.

Key issues for the International Community

With the fighting in Bosnia continuing throughout most of the time period covered by this case study, the IC's attention remained focused on resolving this conflict and it continued to exert pressure on Serbia in an effort to secure Milošević's assistance in bringing the conflict to an end. These efforts to pressurise the regime involved the tightening of UN sanctions against the SRJ following the Bosnian Serbs rejection of the VOPP in April 1993, marking the high point of Serbia's international isolation during the 1990s. Following Milošević's decision to co-operate with the IC and to exert his own pressure on the Bosnian Serbs, the IC gradually reduced Serbia's international isolation,

suspending and eventually terminating UN sanctions. For a brief period in 1993, while Drašković was in detention, the IC was also concerned with the internal political order in Serbia and the undemocratic nature of the Milošević regime, with the issue of Drašković's detention featuring prominently in IC statements. Once this situation had been resolved however, international concern for Serbia's internal politics receded and the Bosnian conflict again became the central focus of IC attention.

Given the continuation of the fighting in Bosnia, and the international preoccupation with this conflict in its dealings with Serbia, the international actors that were most influential in dealing with Serbia between 1992 and 1995 are largely the same as those who had been dealing with the conflict in the previous case study, namely the UN, the US, the EC and its member states. While the CSCE played a less significant role than it had in the early stages of the Yugoslav conflict, this period saw the formation of a new group, known as the Contact Group, which would become a key actor dealing with Serbia.¹ In addition, NATO also took on a more significant role in dealing with the Yugoslav crisis, most notably through its military campaign against the Bosnian Serbs in 1995.

In order to determine the extent to which the democratic opposition parties held positions that differed from those of the Milošević regime on the issues that were most important for the IC at this time, this section will consider their positions on the VOPP, the Contact Group peace plan, and the Dayton agreement.

¹ The Contact Group was an ad hoc group formed specifically to deal with the crisis in Yugoslavia. Its members are the US, the UK, France, Germany, Russia and Italy.

The Vance-Owen Peace Plan

In the spring of 1993, international efforts to resolve the conflict in Bosnia led to the formulation of the Vance-Owen Peace Plan (VOPP), which had profound consequences for the internal political situation within Serbia, both for the Milošević regime and for the democratic opposition. The VOPP was formulated within the framework of the ICFY, and was presented by the IC in January 1993. The plan would recognise Bosnia within its existing borders, but envisioned the division of the country into ten provinces, each of which would be granted substantial autonomy and would be defined primarily on ethnic grounds. Bosnia would have a central government, although this government would have limited powers (Silber & Little, 1996: 276).

Although he had initially expressed reservations about the plan, by the end of April Milošević had been persuaded to accept it (Silber & Little, 1996: 277-278). Owen argues that the prospect of further sanctions had a critical influence on Milošević's decision to accept the VOPP, and to pressurise the Bosnian Serb leadership to do likewise. He identifies this as a major turning point in terms of Milošević's attitudes to the Bosnian conflict and argues that from the end of April 1993 Milošević abandoned the greater Serbia project, prioritising instead the interests of the SRJ (Owen, 1996: 153).² However, according to UN Security Council Resolution 820, which had been passed on 17 April 1993, sanctions against Yugoslavia and Serb-held territories in Croatia and Bosnia were to be strengthened in the event that the Bosnian Serbs did not accept the VOPP. As such, the Republika Srpska (RS) assembly's decision to reject the plan on 27

² Thomas also considers that the desire to avoid further sanctions was a factor in Milošević's decision to accept the VOPP, but also notes Milošević's belief that elements of the plan would be unenforceable as being significant (Thomas, 1999: 147).

April triggered the tightening of UN sanctions and this marked the high point of Serbia's international isolation in the first half of the 1990s.

In spite of the Pale assembly's decision to reject the VOPP, Milošević and the IC continued to exert pressure on the Bosnian Serb leadership and, at a meeting in Athens in early May under considerable pressure, the RS political leader Radovan Karadžić signed the VOPP. His acceptance was, however, conditional on its being approved by the RS assembly, which again refused to endorse the plan. In an effort to exert pressure on the Bosnian Serbs, Milošević imposed a temporary blockade on the River Drina which separated RS from Serbia, allowing only food and medicine to cross the frontier, and also prevented senior Bosnian Serb leaders from entering Serbia. The embargo, however, was abandoned within days of being announced (Silber & Little, 1996: 335).

While the initial reaction of all the democratic opposition parties considered here to the VOPP when it was first announced in early 1993 was generally favourable in spite of some reservations,³ this changed when the Bosnian Serbs voted to reject the plan, marking the beginning of a period in which the democratic opposition parties would become bitterly divided, with the national question a key point of contention. While the SPO, the GSS and the DS were all critical of the Bosnian Serbs' decision not to sign the VOPP, the DSS supported the RS leadership.

³ Drašković argued that the plan should have been signed and stated that it had become clear 'that the doors were wide open for developing and modifying the Vance-Owen plan after the establishment of peace' [in Bosnia] (Tanjug, 26 April 1993, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1674/C1, 28 April 1993). He also expressed a preference for Bosnia to be divided into six as opposed to 10 provinces which could be subdivided into smaller cantons (United Press International, 5 February 1993). While the DS supported the plan, Mićunović urged Bosnian Serb negotiators not to give up the land corridor linking Bosnian Serb territory with both Serbia and Krajina (Andrejevich, 1994: 14), an issue that was also important to Drašković (Tanjug, 8 January 1993, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1583/C1, 11 January 1993). At this stage even the DSS spoke in favour of the plan, stating that it had made it possible to hope that 'peace will finally be restored, which will enable the Bosnian Serbs to negotiate their rightful position under international law' (Tanjug 15 January 1993, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1587/C1, 15 January 1993).

Drašković described the decision of the Bosnian Serb assembly to reject the plan as 'irresponsible from the human point of view' and 'more than catastrophic for Serbia, Montenegro and the entire Serbian people.'⁴ He blamed Milošević for the Bosnian Serbs' refusal to endorse the plan, and used the opportunity to call for both Milošević's and Čosić's resignations.⁵ The GSS was also critical of the Bosnian Serbs' rejection of the plan with Ratimir Tanić, a senior party member, accusing the Bosnian Serb leadership of showing 'massive irresponsibility when the decision in question was one on which life and death depended.'⁶

Further evidence of opposition support for the VOPP was the willingness of some opposition leaders to countenance the enforcement of the VOPP. Mićunović called on the UN to ignore the decision of the Bosnian Serb assembly and to deploy peacekeepers (Thomas, 1999: 153), while Drašković questioned the legitimacy of the Pale Assembly's decision not to endorse plan. Drašković argued that there had been no elections in Republika Srpska since it had been proclaimed, and that those representatives who sat in the assembly had been elected in 1990 to a parliament in a state that had disintegrated. For this reason, he argued, 'From the legal point of view, Radovan Karadžić's Athens signature is still valid,'⁷ and he urged the IC not to recognise the legitimacy of the Bosnian Serb Assembly.⁸

Koštunica, however, stressing the importance of settling the question of a land corridor, claimed that the Vance-Owen map did not constitute a guarantee for Serbs

⁴ Drašković also argued that the plan should have been signed and stated that it had become clear 'that the doors were wide open for developing and modifying the Vance-Owen plan after the establishment of peace' [in Bosnia].

⁵ Tanjug, 6 May 1993, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1683/C1/1, 8 May 1993.

⁶ Tanić quoted in Thomas, 1999, p. 153.

⁷ Tanjug, 6 May 1993 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1683/C1/1, 8 May 1993.

⁸ Croatian Radio, 6 May 1993, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1683/C1/1, 8 May 1993.

living in Bosnia and should therefore be rejected.⁹ As Thomas notes, the DSS decision to reject the VOPP 'marked a major turning point in its attitude to national issues from a position where the interests of the Serbs of Serbia [Srbijanci] were of primary importance to one where solidarity with the communities of Serbs outside Serbia became a key theme' (Thomas, 1999: 151). Koštunica's support for the creation of a greater Serbia is clear. Speaking in late 1993 he stated that Serbia was in the process of creating 'our national state' which would:

be created gradually, it will probably be created from the outlines of those countries that today comprise Serbia, Yugoslavia, the so-called Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Serbia and Montenegro, and from other ethnic areas of ours: the Serbian Republic [in Bosnia-Herzegovina] and the Republic of Serbian Krajina. This process will be lengthy ... but for us there is simply no way out, no solution, no stability if we do not create a Serbian state.'¹⁰

Differences with respect to the VOPP led to turmoil, both within and between some of the democratic opposition parties. The decision to support the VOPP caused a major rift within the SPO, characterised by Goati as a struggle between those who supported a 'civic' orientation and those who supported a 'national' orientation for the party (Goati, 2001a: 115). Drašković, however, maintained control of the party and the Main Committee of the SPO voted to support the VOPP.¹¹ In addition, the different

⁹ Tanjug, 22 April 1993, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1671/C1, 24 April 1993.

¹⁰ Montenegrin TV, 28 November 1993 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1859/C, 30 November 1993.

¹¹ Yugoslav Telegraph Service, 30 April 1993, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1679/C1, 4 May 1993.

positions of the SPO and the DSS regarding the plan strained already tense relations within the DEPOS coalition.¹²

In late May 1993, however, the IC abandoned the VOPP. The primary factor undermining it was a lack of US support. Madeleine Albright, the US ambassador to the UN had described the plan as 'rewarding aggression and punishing the victims' and refused to support a UN Security Council draft resolution which endorsed the plan. Further US reservations about the VOPP related to a belief on the part of some, including Secretary of State Warren Christopher, that the plan could not be implemented (Honig and Both, 1996: 111). On 22 May, Christopher, backed by the UK, France, Russia and Spain, announced a new initiative for resolving the conflict known as the Joint Action Program (JAP). Through the JAP, the IC hoped to contain the Bosnian conflict, and the program advocated the continuing enforcement of sanctions and the no-fly zone, in addition to the creation of several 'safe areas' within Bosnia.¹³ As Silber & Little point out, the JAP represented 'the final nail in the coffin of Vance-Owen, formulating the embryo for the next stage of peace talks: a three-way partition whose terms were dictated by the Serbs and Croats' (Silber & Little, 1996: 289). The IC's acceptance of an ethnically based partition of Bosnia provided a considerable boost to Milošević as it amounted to a de facto recognition of the existence of a Bosnian Serb entity within Bosnia, enabling Milošević to claim that Serb national interests in Bosnia had been effectively protected. As will be seen, this seriously undermined the democratic opposition parties in the December 1993 election.

¹²Further sources of tension within DEPOS in 1993 included the SPO's decision to abandon a parliamentary boycott that had begun in January 1993. In addition, the coalition was also weakened when six members of the non-party group within DEPOS resigned at the end of April 1993 (Antonić, 2002: 152 – author's translation).

¹³ Department of State Dispatch, US Department of State, 24 May 1993.

The abandonment of the VOPP and the adoption of the JAP were welcomed by the Bosnian Serb leadership and also by Šešelj and the SRS in Serbia, but criticised by the GSS and the SPO. Pešić was highly critical stating that the JAP 'strengthens the nationalists and the extremists. Giving in to those who divided up territory will encourage the Albanians. I'm afraid it's a signal for the next flashpoint, Kosovo.'¹⁴ Pešić later stated that she was surprised that 'the world accepted Milošević's and Tudjman's proposals on the division of Bosnia.'¹⁵ Both the SPO and the GSS also expressed concern about the impact that the abandonment of the VOPP would have on the possibility of democratic reform within Serbia and this notion that IC policy was undermining the development of democracy in Serbia was to become a key feature of opposition rhetoric throughout most of the time period covered in this research. According to Pešić:

Now the US, Britain and Russia have decided to cut up Bosnia, the opposition in Serbia has no chance and everything we said in favour of human rights and against 'ethnic cleansing' looks ridiculous. ... The West has recognised the use of force to change borders, betraying their own values. Lord Owen is the real war criminal in all this. After he endorsed genocide in Bosnia against Muslims you may as well forget democracy inside Serbia.¹⁶

Similarly, Mihailo Marković of the SPO stated that:

Europe and the US have given Milošević the green light in Bosnia, and that will have an impact a big impact on us inside Serbia. ... Lord Owen has pronounced him a big peace-maker and a factor of stability in the Balkans. He naively thinks Milošević will calm down the war for him. He never

¹⁴ *Financial Times* (London), 26 May 1993.

¹⁵ 'We Are No Moral Lighthouse,' Vesna Pešić interviewed by Vesna Bjekić, AIM, 19 January 1994.

¹⁶ *The Independent* (London), 24 June 1993.

understood the man who set Yugoslavia on fire will never put the fires out, that the lifeblood of the Serbian government is war.¹⁷

In summary, the VOPP, while initially given a cautious welcome by all of the democratic opposition parties, led to a rift within the SPO, and between the DSS and the SPO within the DEPOS coalition. However, with the exception of the DSS, the democratic opposition parties were prepared to accept the plan and criticised the Bosnian Serb leadership for rejecting it, in essence the same position as that of the IC. However, the position of the Milošević regime at this time, at least publicly, was also one of support for the plan. The GSS argued that the abandonment of the VOPP and the acceptance of the ethnically based division of Bosnia represented a victory for nationalist forces in Serbia, and undermined the position of those parties who had opposed the war from the outset. The SPO was also critical of the decision to abandon the VOPP, and criticised the IC for considering that Milošević could be a peacemaker and factor for stability in the former Yugoslavia.

The Contact Group Peace Plan

The next international peace plan for Bosnia that was to have a significant impact on the internal political situation in Serbia was the Contact Group Peace Plan. This plan preserved Bosnia within its internationally recognised borders, but divided the country into two parts, with fifty-one per cent of the territory going to the Bosnian Serbs and the remaining forty-nine per cent to the newly-established Croat-Muslim federation (Silber & Little, 1996: 337). Milošević, still keen to get the sanctions lifted, supported the Contact

¹⁷ *The Independent* (London), 24 June 1993

Group plan and urged the Bosnian Serbs to do the same. The Bosnian Serbs, however, were less impressed with the plan, and the RS assembly voted to accept it only as the basis for renewed negotiations. The Contact Group had, however, presented its plan on a 'take it or leave it' basis, and as such the Bosnian Serbs conditional acceptance was seen as an outright rejection (Thomas, 1999: 201-202).

On 2 August 1994, the day before the Bosnian Serb assembly was due to discuss the Contact Group plan, the Serbian government sent a letter to the RS leadership urging it to accept the plan. The strongly worded letter amounted to an attack on the Bosnian Serb leaders and warned them that, should they reject the plan, this would 'destroy any possibility of our further relations.'¹⁸ In spite of these warnings, on 3 August the Bosnian Serb assembly again failed to give its unqualified support to the plan. Milošević's response was considerably more resolute than had been the case with regard to the rejection of the VOPP. On 4 August the Belgrade authorities ordered that political and economic relations between Yugoslavia and RS be broken off, that members of the RS leadership be refused entry to the SRJ, and that the RS-SRJ border be closed to all goods with the exception of food, medicine and clothing (Owen, 1996: 320).

As had been the case with the VOPP, attitudes to the Contact Group peace plan and the blockade imposed on the Bosnian Serbs became the key political division on the Serbian political scene at this time. Both the SPO and the GSS supported the Contact Group plan and condemned the Bosnian Serb leadership for rejecting it. The DS

¹⁸ Tanjug, 2 August 1994 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/2065/C, 4 August 1994. The letter went on to state that by delaying acceptance of the plan, and the lifting of sanctions, that the Bosnian Serbs were 'inflicting huge damage to the whole of the nation and to all the citizens of the [SRJ]', asserting that if the plan were rejected that this would represent 'the greatest ever treason of Serbian national interests', and warning the RS leadership not to 'hide behind a referendum' because they had 'no right to decide on the fate of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in a referendum.'

however, engaging in increasingly nationalist rhetoric, joined the DSS in firmly opposing both the terms of the plan and the Milošević regime's sanctions against the Bosnian Serbs. The DS proposed that the Contact Group plan should not be accepted unless a confederation could be established between Serbia and RS, along the lines of a similar arrangement that had already been established between Croatia and the Muslim-Croat federation. Djindjić argued that without this there would be 'no guarantee that the (Bosnian) Serbs will reach their objective, that of not separating from Yugoslavia.'¹⁹ By late 1993 it had become clear that Djindjić was beginning to promote a more nationalist position and was more unequivocal in his support for the creation of a greater Serbia than had been the case in 1992.²⁰ However, Djindjić continued to maintain that the use of force to achieve these goals was inappropriate. Commenting on his decision to go to Pale for talks with Karadžić, Djindjić commented that 'national interests can be successfully protected with the policy of peace' and revealed that he and Karadžić had agreed that 'the Serb Republic in Bosnia should join Serbia,' but that 'everything should be done in agreement with the international community, which I believe would have no objections on condition there is peace.'²¹

The reaction of the DSS to the Contact Group's proposals was also negative, and Koštunica criticised both the quality of the lands offered to the Bosnian Serbs, and the links between them. Koštunica also condemned the plan because he believed that it did not allow for the linking of Republika Srpska with the SRJ, even at a confederal level. He

¹⁹ Agence France Presse, 25 August 1994.

²⁰ Serbian TV, 30 October 1993, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1834/C, 1 November 1993. Djindjić expressed similar statements in late November when he made reference to that fact that 'a 100-year-old national programme is being fulfilled (Serbian Radio, 25 November 1993, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1857/C, 27 November 1993).

²¹ 'Eight Hours With Karadžić,' Djindjić interviewed by Uroš Komlenović, *Vreme NDA* No. 127, 28 February 1994.

argued that there should be a referendum on the plan involving the entire Serb people, because 'acceptance or rejection of the plan will affect both the Bosnian Serbs and the citizens of Serbia and Montenegro.'²²

While the DS and the DSS were becoming increasingly nationalist, the SPO maintained its moderate position and argued that the Contact Group plan should be signed. In addition, the party issued a statement in support of Milošević's acceptance of the plan and 'in all his efforts for peace.' The statement went on to say that 'Peace is the primary and most important national interest of the Serbian nation today - as the SPO has been stressing since the beginning of the war - and the struggle for peace and for lifting the sanctions therefore comes before all party and political disagreements.'²³ However, Drašković was not entirely averse to nationalist rhetoric and argued that acceptance of the Contact Group plan, in addition to democratic reforms in Serbia, would act to unite the Serb populations of the former Yugoslavia, claiming that 'Peace will destroy the unnatural marriage between Croats and Muslims, and democratically transformed Serbia and Montenegro will draw unto themselves all of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Serbian Krajina as well.'²⁴

While Milošević was coming under some internal pressure in relation to his acceptance of the plan, the IC reacted with cautious optimism to Milošević's decision to break ties with the Bosnian Serbs. However, before offering any sanctions relief, the IC

²² Tanjug, 13 July 1994 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/2048/C, 15 July 1994.

²³ Tanjug, 31 July 1994 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/2063/C, 2 August 1994. Milan Komnenić, also of the SPO stated in October that the Contact Group plan should be accepted by the Bosnian Serbs, because their refusal to sign it 'provided Muslim killers, although inadvertently, with a cover for crimes like the one on Mt Igman by saying the Serbs favored war' (Tanjug, 11 October 1994 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/2125/C, 13 October 1994).

²⁴ Tanjug, 25 August 1994 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/2086/C, 29 August 1994.

insisted that the blockade had to be assessed by international monitors.²⁵ While Milošević was initially reluctant to accept this,²⁶ under pressure he relented. When the monitors reported that the blockade was being enforced, the Security Council passed Resolution 943 on 23 September 1994 suspending certain sanctions for a period of one hundred days. Resolution 943 allowed for the resumption of civilian passenger flights to and from Belgrade and civilian passenger ferry services between Bar and Bari in Italy, together with the resumption of cultural and sports exchanges, and this marked the beginning of the end of Serbia's first period of enforced international isolation. On the same day the Security Council also passed Resolution 942, which imposed stringent sanctions against the Bosnian Serbs for their failure to accept the Contact Group peace plan. While the democratic opposition parties welcomed the lifting of some sanctions they were critical of the fact that not all sanctions had been lifted.²⁷ Furthermore, both the DS and DSS were critical of the decision to impose sanctions on the Bosnian Serbs.²⁸

The democratic opposition parties' reactions to the Contact Group peace plan revealed the increasing divisions within the Serbian opposition. While the SPO and the GSS remained supportive of ongoing efforts to resolve the Bosnian conflict, the DS and the DSS were taking ever more hard line nationalist positions as Milošević increasingly adopted the role of peacemaker. While the SPO and the GSS essentially maintained positions that were close to those of the IC, Milošević's willingness to co-operate with international efforts to resolve the conflict, together with the increasingly nationalist tone

²⁵ The Associated Press, 10 September 1994.

²⁶ The Associated Press, 30 August 1994. Aside from the fact that this would have increased criticisms of him on the part of the opposition, Milošević was apparently also concerned at how this would play within his own party, the SPS (*The Christian Science Monitor*, 2 September 1994).

²⁷ Tanjug, 24 September 1994 and Tanjug, 25 September 1994 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/2111/C, 27 September 1994.

²⁸ Tanjug, 24 September 1994 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/2111/C, 27 September 1994.

of the DS and the DSS, meant that, by 1994, there was no incentive for the IC to consider the democratic opposition parties as a credible alternative to the Milošević regime.

The Dayton Agreement

The Bosnian war formally ended with the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement in late 1995, which Milošević signed on behalf of the Bosnian Serbs as head of a joint Serb delegation that had negotiated its terms. Milošević was swiftly rewarded for his efforts to force the Bosnian Serbs to comply with the terms of the peace agreement and on 22 November, the day after the initialling of the peace agreement in Dayton, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1022 which indefinitely suspended the sanctions against the SRJ, thereby bringing to an end the period of international isolation experienced by Serbia during the years of the Bosnian war. The sanctions were subsequently permanently removed in 1996 following the first postwar elections in Bosnia.

The reaction of the democratic opposition parties to the Dayton agreement was mixed. While all of the parties considered in this study welcomed the ending of the war in Bosnia, the DS and DSS were more critical of the provisions of the Dayton Accords than were the SPO and GSS. Both the SPO and the GSS were reluctant to criticise Milošević for accepting the terms of the Dayton agreement, with Drašković stating that he did not want to 'join those accusing President Milošević of selling out the Serbs on the other side of the River Drina in Dayton and humiliating them here. ... Milošević simply accepted what had to be accepted,'²⁹ while Žarko Korač of the GSS asserted that: 'it's

²⁹ Tanjug, 5 December 1995 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2480/A, 6 December 1995.

unreasonable for us to oppose Milošević now just to oppose him, because he's doing the right thing.'³⁰

While the DS also welcomed the end of the conflict in Bosnia, Djindjić stated that 'There is no particular reason for euphoria or triumphalism because a difficult period of renewal in the lands of the former Bosnia-Hercegovina lies ahead of us, as well as the task of building democratic institutions in Serbia and Yugoslavia.'³¹ The DSS also welcomed the end of the war in Bosnia. Vladan Batić, speaking after the agreement was reached in Dayton, stated that it was 'high time peace is made in the area of former Yugoslavia. ... I hope the peace accord is not at the expense of the Serbian people. I consider that after four years of a senseless war, everybody lost something, there is no winner in this war, and therefore I hail peace.'³² Koštunica accepted the Dayton agreement, claiming that 'in these conditions this was the only solution'³³ but he was not entirely satisfied with it, describing it as a 'peace with little justice.'³⁴ In November Koštunica stated that Dayton contained less for the Serbs than for other groups in Bosnia, and claimed that the strengthening and deepening of ties between Serbia and the SRJ must now be of 'paramount importance.'³⁵ Koštunica was also critical of the IC which he accused of bias in terms of its approach to the conflict in Bosnia, as a result of its failure to deal with the large presence of Croatian forces that had been active in the conflict.³⁶ Cigar summarises some of Koštunica's objections:

³⁰ *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 15 October 1995.

³¹ Djindjić quoted in Thomas, 1999, p. 250.

³² United Press International, 21 November 1995.

³³ Serbian Radio, 14 December 1995, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/D2488/A, 15 December 1995.

³⁴ Koštunica quoted in Thomas, 1999, p. 250.

³⁵ Tanjug, 22 November 1995 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2469/A, 23 November 1995.

³⁶ Tanjug, 11 October 1995 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2433/A, 13 October 1995.

When Milošević signed the Dayton Accords, Koštunica was predictably critical, labelling that 'a great political failure of the ruling regime', in particular because he saw the 'independence of Republika Srpska as restricted' and condemned Milošević personally for having 'in practice slammed the door to any significant tie between [the SRJ] and the Republika Srpska'. Specifically, he castigated Milošević for not doing anything 'to enable the Bosnian Serbs to concretize at least part of the right to establish links with the mother country [i.e. Serbia] (Cigar, 2001: 43).

With the ending of the Bosnian war and the diminishing importance of this as an issue within Serbia, the opposition again began to turn its attention to the political situation inside Serbia and the undemocratic nature of the Milošević regime. Some opposition leaders at this time began to talk of the possibility that the IC might force some concessions from Milošević in terms of democratic reform within Serbia. Speaking in advance of the Security Council's decision to indefinitely suspend sanctions against Serbia, Žarko Korač of the GSS argued that the West should demand some democratic changes in Serbia in exchange for lifting the sanctions.³⁷ Similarly, Drašković, while welcoming the Dayton agreement, expressed concern that it may strengthen Milošević,³⁸ and warned that:

If the United States and Europe insist that Serbia must change from within, [Milošević's] hopes of a communist revival will die. He will buy time to keep in power. Maybe he will become a champion of capitalism. Maybe he will attack communism. ... But if they give in, the Balkans will have its own North Korea.³⁹

³⁷ *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 15 October 1995.

³⁸ *The New York Times*, 22 November 1995.

³⁹ *The Associated Press*, 28 October 1995.

Djindjić questioned Milošević's motivation for attempting to bring the war in Bosnia to an end, arguing that this was done merely to stay in power, but also noting that 'The sanctions, the loss of stature Yugoslavia has suffered worldwide and the unpopularity of the war are elements that are leading to political instability and weakening Milošević's grip.'⁴⁰

In summary, while at end of 1992 the democratic opposition parties were highly critical of the Milošević regime for instigating conflict in the former Yugoslavia and bringing about a situation in which Serbia was subjected to stringent international sanctions, this consensus began to break down during 1993 and 1994. A clear division emerged between the SPO and the GSS who remained committed to international efforts to bring the Bosnian conflict to an end, and the DS and the DSS who adopted considerably more nationalist positions with respect to this conflict, siding with the Bosnian Serb leadership against both the Milošević regime and the IC, and opposing international peace plans designed to bring the fighting to an end. As such, while the GSS and the SPO maintained positions that were close to those of the IC, the DS and the DSS adopted positions that were incompatible with the IC's goals. This, and the fact that Milošević was co-operating with international efforts to bring the conflict to an end – and as such held a position that was close to that of the IC – meant that there was neither motive nor incentive for the IC to consider the democratic opposition as a credible alternative to the Milošević regime at this time.

⁴⁰ *The New York Times*, 21 September 1995.

Challenges to the Milošević Regime

The arrest of Vuk Drašković

In June 1993, the Milošević regime came under both internal and international pressure following the arrest and detention of Vuk Drašković. Drašković's arrest came about following demonstrations outside the federal parliament building which resulted in the death of a police officer.⁴¹ That night police arrested 121 people, including Drašković and his wife - who were both severely beaten - and raided the main offices of the SPO. Drašković and his wife were accused of several offences including preventing officials from carrying out security duties, attacking the constitutional order, and treason, for which they could receive a ten year prison sentence.⁴² It was also announced that Drašković and his wife would remain in custody for thirty days while the allegations against them were investigated. The Milošević regime portrayed the events leading up to Drašković's arrest as an attempt on the part of the opposition to seize power by force and there were calls to ban the SPO on the grounds that it had, on previous occasions, called for the overthrow of the state (Thomas, 1999: 157-158).

Drašković's plight attracted both internal and international sympathy, with opposition parties in Serbia mobilising in support of the SPO leader, and calls by

⁴¹ The demonstrations took place following an incident when an SRS deputy knocked a prominent SPO representative unconscious in the federal parliament after the removal of Ćosić as Federal President.

⁴² IPS-Inter Press Service, 8 June 1993.

numerous states and international institutions to have him released.⁴³ While these international calls for Drašković's release did not contain explicit threats against Milošević, some did link the issue to the prospect of continued international isolation for Serbia if the opposition leader was not released. This was implied in a letter to Milošević from French President Mitterand who stated that 'Only if the Serbian authorities demonstrate a readiness to respect human rights and to guarantee the affirmation of basic social values, including the right of the individual to freely express his opinion, can Serbia hope to return to the community of European nations.'⁴⁴ Similarly, an EC statement issued on 29 June asserted that 'The detention, ill treatment and lack of information on the health of Mr. and Mrs. Drašković constitute flagrant violations of their human rights' and that this represented 'a further illustration of the irresponsible policy of the Serbian leadership that will contribute to isolate Serbia-Montenegro from the international community, carrying serious consequences for the Serbia-Montenegrin population.'⁴⁵

Internally, many democratic opposition parties and NGOs in Serbia also appealed for Drašković's release. The DS made its first appeal on 6 June and also demanded the resignation of Interior Minister Zoran Sokolović and called for a parliamentary debate on the powers of the Interior Ministry.⁴⁶ On 5 June a number of political parties and NGOs united to form the Committee of the Democratic Public for the Release of Vuk Drašković

⁴³ In the days immediately following Drašković's arrest, calls for his release came from Greece, France, Poland, the UN Human Rights Commission, the UK, Russia, the US, the EU and the CSCE, among others (Tanjug, 6 June 1993 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1709/C1/1, 8 June 1993; *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 12 June 1993 in *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press*, 7 July 1993; Agence France Presse, 7 June 1993; PAP Polish Press Agency, 14 June 1993; IPS-Inter Press Service, 15 June 1993; The Press Association, 16 June 1993; United Press International, 7 July 1993).

⁴⁴ *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 12 June 1993 in *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press*, 7 July 1993.

⁴⁵ Agence France Presse, 29 June 1993.

⁴⁶ Tanjug, 6 June 1993 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1709/C1/1, 8 June 1993.

and for the Defence of Democratic Liberties. This group included the Serbian Liberal Party (SLS), a minor party that has split off from the DS in 1991; the Centre for Anti-War Action, an anti-war group formed in 1991 of which Pešić was co-founder and director; and the GSS.⁴⁷

The democratic opposition parties appealed directly to the IC for support in trying to secure Drašković's release. On 9 June representatives from the SPO, DSS and GSS met with Owen and Stoltenberg⁴⁸ in the hope that they could exert pressure on Milošević to secure Drašković's release.⁴⁹ However, their appeals to Milošević had no effect and, during a break in his talks with the two mediators, Milošević, in his first public comment on the case, told journalists that Drašković's release was 'not a matter of political discussion. It's a matter of criminal responsibility.'⁵⁰

In spite of this pressure, the regime initially refused to release Drašković, and on 29 June he was formally indicted on charges of 'preventing an authorised official from performing security duties' and, together with Danica Drašković, 'of rallying a large group of citizens by their influence and activities and directing them to perform violent acts' that resulted in the death of a person.⁵¹ This prompted Drašković to begin a hunger strike on 1 July.⁵² However, on 9 July Milošević caved in to pressure and released Drašković and his wife. The move came amid reports from Drašković's medical team

⁴⁷ Tanjug, 5 June 1993 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1709/C1, 8 June 1993. The authorities obstructed opposition efforts to secure Drašković's release by banning demonstrations, arresting activists for trying to organise petitions demanding his release, and blocking streets to prevent protestors from holding a rally outside the prison where Drašković was being held.

⁴⁸ Thorvald Stoltenberg replaced Cyrus Vance as Co-Chairman of the ICFY in May 1993.

⁴⁹ Tanjug, 9 June 1993 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1712/C1, 11 June 1993.

⁵⁰ The Associated Press, 9 June 1993.

⁵¹ Tanjug, 30 June 1993 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1730/C1, 2 July 1993.

⁵² Agence France Presse, 1 July 1993.

that he was close to death,⁵³ and the day before a planned demonstration was due to take place in Belgrade.⁵⁴ Milošević attributed his decision to drop the charges against Drašković to international pressure, asserting that the publicity surrounding Drašković's detention was 'creating a bad image of our country among those people who have inflicted the blockade on Serbia because of our fight for freedom against those who are committing genocide against us.'⁵⁵

While there was a certain degree of cooperation among the various opposition parties in their efforts to secure Drašković's release, this is not considered to have been a crucial factor in the decision to free him. Stojan Cerović, a highly regarded independent journalist noted that: 'The opposition was pretty ineffectual. Some of the parties, like the Democratic Party, don't like Drašković and even some of the SPO leaders are jealous of him and would like to replace him. A lot of them were just afraid. This is a land of fear.' However Cerović emphasised the importance of what Drašković had achieved, stating that it showed 'that Milošević and his police are not invincible.'⁵⁶ Antonić also notes that support from the other parties was hardly overwhelming, pointing out that at the most significant public demonstrations in support of Drašković, the other opposition party leaders were notable by their absence. For Antonić, the decisive factor in the decision to release Drašković was that Drašković's detention was casting a shadow over Milošević's attempts to forge a new co-operative relationship with the IC⁵⁷ (Antonić, 2002: 153-154). Pešić clearly recognised the limits of the opposition's co-operation over the Drašković

⁵³ The Associated Press, 8 July 1993.

⁵⁴ Tanjug, 8 July 1993, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1737/C1, 10 July 1993.

⁵⁵ *The Observer*, 11 July 1993.

⁵⁶ *The Observer*, 11 July 1993.

⁵⁷ Author's translation.

affair, acknowledging that the events had 'managed to bring about some unification among the opposition,' but stating that she doubted that this would last.⁵⁸

In summary, the international condemnation of the Serbian authorities over the detention of Drašković marked the first time between 1992 and 2000 that the IC sided with the democratic opposition parties against Milošević and made Serbia's internal political order the focus of its criticisms of the Milošević regime. The appeals of the democratic opposition parties to the IC to intervene to help secure Drašković's release not only raised their international profile but also constituted a clear example of their highlighting the regime's lack of legitimacy internationally and also raising the costs to Milošević of his authoritarian actions, one of the key tasks necessary to effectively oppose the regime. That Milošević was amenable to international pressure at this time was clear in his decision to concede and release Drašković, and his desire to forge a new, co-operative relationship with the IC is considered to have been a crucial and possibly decisive factor in this decision.

The December 1993 republican election

Milošević's decision to support the VOPP and his subsequent attempts to pressurise the Bosnian Serbs into accepting the plan led to a rift between his party and the SRS, and a breakdown in co-operation between the two parties at the parliamentary level. Tension between the SPS and the SRS mounted throughout 1993, and in October, facing a vote of confidence in the Serbian parliament that he was sure to lose, Milošević dissolved the parliament and called elections for 19 December 1993 (Mihailović, 1997:

⁵⁸ *The Observer*, 11 July 1993.

53-54). At this time the democratic opposition was in considerable disarray. Divisions between the parties were greatly exacerbated by their differences regarding the situation in Bosnia and the international response to the conflict, and there was significant tension not just between the parties, but also within the DS and the SPO, with one of the most significant sources of tension being differences regarding the Serbian national question and the conflict in Bosnia.

In addition to the tensions within the SPO, and between the DSS and the SPO within DEPOS, that have already been mentioned, there was also a serious rift developing between Djindjić and Mićunović within the DS. Both put forward proposed platforms for the election campaign and on 30 October the DS Main Committee opted for Djindjić's proposals. While Mićunović formally remained as party president, this period essentially marked the beginning of Djindjić taking control of the DS.⁵⁹ As has been mentioned above, there was also a rift within the SPO regarding Drašković's decision to support the VOPP, with some senior party members criticising Drašković and advocating a more strongly nationalist position (Goati, 2001a: 115).

Similar divisions between the parties in the DEPOS coalition proved irreconcilable and in late October any prospect of the DSS remaining within DEPOS was shattered when the party issued a statement on its position with respect to the alliance, asserting that political differences between the DSS and the SPO were too great for the DSS to continue within DEPOS. Among the policy differences between the SPO and the DSS that Koštunica emphasised were national policy and the VOPP.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Anastasijević places much blame on Djindjić's shoulders for the frequent splits within the DS, drawing parallels between Milošević's rise to power within the SKS, through the elimination of his own mentor, Ivan Stambolić, and the manner in which Djindjić ousted Mićunović (Anastasijević, 2000: 105).

⁶⁰ Serbian TV, 28 October 1993 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1833/C, 30 October 1993

DEPOS, as it had existed for the December 1992 elections, was now in tatters, as both the DSS and the SLS announced that they would not participate in the forthcoming elections as part of the alliance.⁶¹ Drašković, however, still believed that a united opposition stood a better chance of defeating the Milošević regime in the forthcoming elections and so began to look for alternative coalition partners. On 15 November it was announced that a reconstituted DEPOS (sometimes referred to as DEPOS II), comprising the SPO, GSS and the smaller Nova Demokratija (ND),⁶² would contest the forthcoming elections (Thomas, 1999: 183).⁶³

Concerned about the unfavourable conditions in which the opposition parties would have to operate, and also about the limited time that would be available for them to mount their election campaigns, Drašković initially stated that the SPO would be boycotting the forthcoming elections.⁶⁴ However, when it became clear that the other opposition parties would not join the SPO in an electoral boycott, Drašković changed his mind, alleging that 'DEPOS had been forced to contest the elections by less democratic

⁶¹ The alliance had also been weakened earlier in the year by the departure of six of the parliamentary representatives who had been selected from the group of prominent intellectuals who had been part of the coalition. These individuals not only withdrew from the parliament but also announced that they would be retiring from politics altogether (Thomas, 1997: 150).

⁶² ND was a small political party that was close to the SPO and had also been a member of the original DEPOS coalition.

⁶³ Talks were held with the aim of extending DEPOS to include the DS and the DSS but these ultimately failed, with DEPOS blaming Koštunica and Djindjić. In his rejection of the possibility of a unified opposition contesting the elections, Koštunica again raised the issue of differences with respect to the national question, stating that 'It is not possible to unite the parties that advocate the possible reconstruction of the (former) Yugoslavia and those, like the DSS, that strive for the establishment of a democratic Serbian state' (Tanjug, 1 December 1993 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1862/C, 3 December 1993)

⁶⁴ Tanjug, 20 October 1993 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1826/C, 22 October 1993 The Associated Press, 21 October 1993. Drašković partly blamed the position in which the opposition found itself on the sanctions, stating that these: 'firstly affected ordinary people and the democratic opposition. We have no money. We have no cars. We have no petrol. We have no possibility to travel around Serbia to have election rallies to explain our programs. The only way to campaign is TV. But the door to TV is closed to us. Under such conditions we have no chance' (*The Christian Science Monitor*, 27 October 1993).

opposition parties which accepted the unequal conditions and which rejected a unified electoral list of the democratic opposition.’⁶⁵

At the time of the calling of the 1993 elections, Serbia was in ‘a catastrophic crisis’ (Slavujević, 1998: 100). Furthermore, in the run-up to the election, this crisis intensified. According to AntoniĆ, in October 1993 the monthly inflation rate in Yugoslavia was approximately 1.9%. By November the figure 20.2%, while by December this had risen to 178.9%, or a daily inflation rate of 28%⁶⁶ (AntoniĆ, 2002: 165). However, in spite of this, as Goati points out, in the ‘politically “overheated” atmosphere before the 1993 elections ... the central axis of differentiation of the electoral body was not in the economic and social domain but in the sphere of the “Serbian national issue”’ (Goati, 2001a: 119).

The 1993 election campaign saw the democratic opposition parties competing against a regime that had repositioned itself as a moderate pro-national party, and also an advocate of moderate rather than radical change to deal with Serbia’s severe social and economic problems (Slavujević, 1998: 101-102). In relation to the national question, AntoniĆ notes that the regime used its formidable propaganda resources to position the party between DEPOS, which was portrayed as a party of ‘traitors’ who sought Serbia’s surrender, and the ‘irresponsible and war-mongering radicals’ who wanted war with the whole world⁶⁷ (AntoniĆ, 2002: 167).

In terms of its election campaign, the DS used the word ‘honesty’ as its slogan,⁶⁸ accused the authorities of corruption,⁶⁹ and promised economic prosperity and stability

⁶⁵ Tanjug, 16 November 1993 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1849/C, 18 November 1993

⁶⁶ Author’s translation

⁶⁷ Author’s translation

⁶⁸ IPS-International Press Service, 6 December 1993

should the DS triumph in the elections.⁷⁰ During the election campaign however, Djindjić expressed a desire that all parties should be united with respect to the national question and not let it become a matter of political dispute, and also called on all political parties, both government and opposition, to 'tell the world clearly that, regardless of all other differences, there is no difference in the view that the sanctions are bad and harmful to all of us. We should destroy our enemies' illusions that they can divide us with the sanctions, and that they will create a rift among us.'⁷¹ This is in contrast to the previous time period when the party used the sanctions against the regime, blaming Milošević for their imposition and clearly highlighting the costs of the regime's rule to Serbia. This change of approach is evident in Djindjić's statement that one of the most important issues for the party in its campaign was 'how to improve the current authorities' management of the scant national resources in the existing situation.'⁷² The other issues that Djindjić highlighted were the need to prepare for when the sanctions were lifted and whether or not the opposition could bring about the lifting of sanctions more quickly than could the current authorities.⁷³ Again, this shows a clear change from the previous time period in which the opposition argued, albeit wrongly, that with Milošević in power, the sanctions would remain in place. Furthermore, while the DS criticised the government's handling of the economy, Djindjić was careful not to criticise Milošević himself, explaining afterwards that 'These were not presidential elections, but elections for the

⁶⁹ Serbian TV, 13 December 1993, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1873/C, 16 December 1993.

⁷⁰ Tanjug, 15 December 1993 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1847/C, 17 December 1993.

⁷¹ Serbian Radio, 25 November 1993, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1857/C, 27 November 1993

⁷² Yugoslav Telegraph Service news agency, 7 November 1993 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1842/C, 10 November 1993.

⁷³ Yugoslav Telegraph Service news agency, 7 November 1993 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1842/C, 10 November 1993.

government and delegates to the republican parliament.’⁷⁴ Slavujević argues that in this way the DS was hoping to attract ‘dissatisfied but non-radical voters’ and while being critical of the government’s incompetence the DS ‘avoided direct confrontation with S. Milošević’ (Slavujević, 1998: 103). Possibly as a result of its non-confrontational stance vis-à-vis Milošević, the DS received more favourable coverage in the state controlled media than did the other opposition parties.⁷⁵

Drašković and the reconstituted DEPOS coalition, which now included the GSS, continued to adopt a moderate position in the election campaign and did not emphasise the national question, choosing instead to criticise the regime for the catastrophic economic crisis (Slavujević, 1998: 103). During the election campaign Drašković outlined the three things that he believed were necessary for Serbia: ‘The war must stop, the sanctions must be lifted, and Serbia must receive international financial and other help.’⁷⁶ Drašković also claimed that DEPOS was the only organisation that could achieve these objectives ‘because the whole world knows only DEPOS. DEPOS has friends throughout the world. They are just waiting for this big change in Serbia and the turnabout will take place.’⁷⁷ Drašković asserted this belief in the international standing of DEPOS on more than one occasion, possibly reflecting a belief on his part that the high level of international support and attention that he received throughout his detention in June and July, implied international support for him and for DEPOS in the election

⁷⁴ ‘Either a Joint Government or Else Romania,’ Djindjić interviewed by Branka Kaljević, AIM, Belgrade, 23 January 1994.

⁷⁵ ‘Either a Joint Government or Else Romania,’ Djindjić interviewed by Branka Kaljević, AIM, Belgrade, 23 January 1994.

⁷⁶ Serbian Radio, 20 November 1993, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1853/C, 23 November 1993. On another occasion Drašković stated that DEPOS’s two main aims were to get the sanctions lifted and obtain funds for Serbia’s recovery’ (Tanjug, 15 December 1993, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1873/C, 16 December 1993).

⁷⁷ Serbian Radio, 20 November 1993, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1853/C, 23 November 1993.

campaign. He stressed that in the event of a DEPOS victory: 'The sanctions will be lifted immediately. I can tell you that the highest doors in Moscow, Paris, London, Athens, Washington, and everywhere are wide open to me personally. Businessmen from all over the world will invest enormous capital.'⁷⁸

While on the whole DEPOS was considerably more moderate on the national question than were the DS and the DSS at this time, as the election approached, Drašković displayed considerable inconsistency, making statements in support of greater Serbian nationalism during campaign rallies that were irreconcilable with his generally moderate stance. Five days before the election, he declared that he would support a 'United States of Serbia' and that Serb populated areas of the former-Yugoslavia would soon come under 'one hat, one roof.'⁷⁹ Furthermore, he asserted that 'Sarajevo, Mostar and Pakrac will all be part of Serbia.'⁸⁰ How this was to be achieved while simultaneously working towards ending the conflict in Bosnia and ensuring the lifting of international sanctions was not made clear.

The DSS gave the national question a greater emphasis in its campaign than did DEPOS or the DS, with Koštunica stating that the central issues for his party were the national programme and socio-economic and democratic change.⁸¹ He criticised the undemocratic nature of the Milošević regime, noting that none of the important decisions relating to state and national interests had been discussed in the parliament and asserting that a 'country in which the national and foreign policy are conducted by one man is not a

⁷⁸ Serbian TV, 14 November 1993 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1847/C, 16 November 1993

⁷⁹ *The Guardian* (London), 16 December 1993

⁸⁰ *The Independent* (London), 17 December 1993. Drašković is also reported to have stated that western Hercegovina should be given to the Croats as 'it has never been ours' (Yugoslav Telegraph Service news agency, 29 November 1993 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1860/C, 1 December 1993).

⁸¹ Serbian TV, 21 November 1993 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1853/C, 23 November 1993.

democratic country.’⁸² The DSS campaign slogan described the party as the ‘voice of hope’⁸³ but Koštunica warned that, given the seriousness of Serbia’s problems, ‘false promises on changing things overnight are not being offered.’⁸⁴

In spite of the international support that the democratic opposition parties had received in securing Drašković’s release in mid-1993, there was very little international attention paid to the December 1993 elections, with few international comments on the decision to call the election, on the election campaign or on the election results. Remarks attributed to an unnamed ‘European diplomat’ suggest that the IC expected Milošević’s SPS to win the election,⁸⁵ while an unnamed ‘Western diplomat’ is quoted as stating that none of the opposition parties were offering anything significantly different from the SPS, ‘only a change of image without selling out on the national issue.’⁸⁶

That the IC paid little attention to the 1993 election may be due to the fact that Milošević had become considerably more co-operative with international efforts to resolve the Bosnian conflict.⁸⁷ This, together with the fact that the opposition was divided and that some of the democratic opposition parties were increasingly espousing positions that were at odds with the IC’s positions, suggests that, in terms of achieving their immediate goals, maintaining the status quo in Serbia at this time would have been a more attractive option. As such, while the IC was prepared to support the democratic

⁸² Serbian TV, 21 November 1993 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/1853/C, 23 November 1993.

⁸³ Serbian Radio, 16 November 1993 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1849/C, 18 November 1993.

⁸⁴ Serbian TV, 21 November 1993 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/1853/C, 23 November 1993.

⁸⁵ Agence France Presse, 21 October 1993.

⁸⁶ *The Christian Science Monitor*, 17 December 1993.

⁸⁷ Another factor that may account for the lack of international attention paid to the 1993 election in Serbia is that most international actors were preoccupied with elections in Russia that took place a week earlier and which were called after a major political crisis there. Indeed, some have speculated that Milošević’s decision to hold the Serbian elections only a week after the Russian polls was designed to diminish the likelihood of international attention (The Associated Press, 21 October 1993).

opposition in its campaign to have Drašković released, this did not fundamentally alter either the relationship between the democratic opposition parties and the IC, or the basic approach of the IC which remained firmly focused on pressuring the Milošević regime to attain concessions with respect to Bosnia.

The election results

The results of the 1993 elections were another disappointment for the opposition, in that the SPS remained as the single largest party in parliament, increasing its share of the vote by over five per cent from its result in the 1992 election for the Serbian parliament. This gave the SPS twenty-two seats more than it had won in the 1992 elections, but left it three seats short of the parliamentary majority that it was seeking. The biggest loser in the December 1993 elections was the SRS, which gained only 13.8% of the vote, a drop of close to 10%, and 39 seats compared to the 73 it had won in 1992. This has been largely attributed to a sustained media campaign against the SRS, with Šešelj being completely banned from appearing on state television (Matić, 1998: 119). In addition to regime attempts to discredit the SRS, it also attempted to promote an alternative extreme nationalist party, the Serbian Unity Party (SSJ-Stranka Srpskog Jedinstva), headed by Željko Ražnjatović (more commonly known as Arkan) to take its place. This was unsuccessful, however, as in spite of an expensive electoral campaign and wide coverage in the state-controlled media, the SSJ did not gain a single seat in the Serbian parliament (Goati, 2001a: 118).

PARTY	PERCENTAGE OF VOTE	SEATS
SPS	36.7%	123 (49.2%)
DEPOS	16.6%	45 (18%)
SRS	13.8%	39 (15.6%)
DS	11.6%	29 (11.6%)
DSS	5.1%	7 (2.8%)

Table 2: Results of the December 1993 elections for the Serbian parliament
(Figures from Goati, 2001a: 212)

In terms of the opposition election results, the DS made significant gains winning 11.6% of the vote, up from 4.2% in 1992, and twenty-nine seats in the parliament in which it had only six seats following the 1992 elections. DEPOS emerged with forty-five seats, five fewer than it had in 1992, with its 16.6% of the vote being less than one per cent below what had been achieved in 1992. This can largely be attributed to the DSS having left the coalition however, and on the positive side DEPOS was now the second largest political grouping in the Serbian parliament (Thomas, 1999: 189). The DSS gained only 5.1% of the vote and only seven seats, being the party that was hardest hit by the non-proportional nature of the electoral system. In addition, the turn out in the 1993 elections fell from 69.7% in 1992 to 61.6% in 1993.

While the SPS gained votes and seats in the 1993 elections, some analysts argue that the result was far from a success for the Milošević regime. Antičić, for example, points out that the parliamentary opposition (excluding national minority parties, but including the SRS) won 47% of the votes while the SPS won only 37%. For this reason he claims, Milošević did not win the 1993 election, rather he did not lose it⁸⁸ (Antonić,

⁸⁸ Author's translation.

2002: 165). Similarly, Gordy argues that the 'SPS's performance in the December 1993 elections was its weakest ever,' because it had lost the support of the SRS, while its attempts to promote the SSJ as a substitute for the SRS had 'failed miserably,' forcing the party to search for coalition partners to form a government (Gordy, 1999: 48). As such, although the opposition did not succeed in ousting the regime in December 1993, the election results cannot be considered catastrophic from an opposition perspective; the opposition parties' combined total percentage of the vote increased by 10% from 23.1% in 1992 to 33.1% in 1993 (Goati, 2001a: 117).

Of the individual opposition parties, the DS made the greatest gains which Goati attributes to the parties addressing the 'everyday problems of the citizens and the emphasised tolerance of other political parties, including the Socialists' (Goati, 2001a: 116), a factor that Milošević also considers to be significant.⁸⁹ In terms of the DSS, Goati believes that its poor showing resulted from the hard line nationalist position that it emphasised in the election campaign; a space that he argues 'was fully occupied by SRS.' In addition, while DEPOS gained fewer seats than it had in 1992, this was most likely due to fact that the DSS contested the 1993 elections independently (Goati, 2001a: 116). However, Slavujević notes that the DEPOS campaign also suffered from the lack of a coherent programme for achieving its aims (Slavujević, 1998: 103), indicating that DEPOS might have been able to secure more votes if it had more effectively presented itself as a credible alternative to the Milošević regime.

While the opposition may have increased its level of support, it is, nevertheless, notable that, in spite of the grave social and economic problems that Serbia was experiencing at the end of 1993, the opposition failed to unseat the SPS, and furthermore,

⁸⁹ 'Who Stole The Tarts?' Milan Milošević, *Vreme* NDA, 7 February 1994.

the SPS was able to increase its proportion of the vote, albeit to a lesser extent than Milošević had hoped. In explaining this outcome, analysts note a number of factors including opposition disunity, which saw the three most significant democratic opposition parties – the DS, the DSS and the SPO – contest the elections independently of each other, and which was evident not just in the inability of the democratic opposition parties to form a united front against the regime but also in the divisions that were occurring within the parties (Antonić, 2002: 166; Slavujević, 1998: 101). As Slavujević notes ‘the failed negotiations in coalition formation, denouncements of each other’s views, the questioning of the credentials of each other’s leaders, etc. did not encourage the belief that, even after an election victory, the opposition parties in a coalition government would be able to put their managing potential to practice’ (Slavujević, 1998: 105). As such, opposition disunity hindered the ability of the democratic opposition parties to present a credible alternative to the Milošević regime. Furthermore, this division was important not just because it did not provide a clear alternative choice for voters, but also because the electoral system, described by one commentator as the ‘SPS’s greatest advantage at these elections,’ was designed to favour larger parties (i.e. the SPS).⁹⁰

For Antonić, the most important factor in explaining the SPS result was the regime’s propaganda and control over much of the media⁹¹ (Antonić, 2002: 166). Goati also considers this to be one of the most significant factors and emphasises the success the regime had in terms of convincing voters that it was not to blame for the dire economic situation in which Serbia found itself (Goati, 2001a: 120). This interpretation

⁹⁰ ‘Wisdom After The Event,’ Dragoslav Grujić, *Vreme NDA* No. 119, 2 January 1994.

⁹¹ Author’s translation

was heavily promoted by the state-controlled media. According to Matić, RTS, the state television company, 'pointed to the "undeserved and unjust" United Nations sanctions and a world conspiracy of designers of the new world order as the causes of all social evils. Thus, the ruling party was absolved of all responsibility for the problems' (Matić, 1998: 120). However, while regime propaganda was the decisive factor in the dissemination of this interpretation of the causes of Serbia's woes, Goati considers that the opposition also contributed. In contrast to the situation in 1992, the opposition parties 'did not accuse the ruling regime of causing the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the implementation of economic sanctions,' instead criticising 'the regime's incompetence to pursue [a] more successful economic policy under the circumstances of the international sanctions,' enabling the regime to argue that no government could do better under the circumstances (Goati, 2001a: 121-122). Furthermore, the opposition's acceptance of the regime's interpretation of events also undermined the credibility of the opposition. According to Slavujević, 'By changing its views on the causes of the crisis in society the opposition appeared inconsistent' (Slavujević, 1998: 105).

A further significant contributory factor to the relative success of the SPS in these circumstances was the fact that, in spite of Serbia's social and economic problems, the Serbian national question remained 'the central axis of differentiation of the electoral body' (Goati, 2001a: 119); an issue on which the regime could claim some success. This clearly demonstrates the SPS's 'decisive role in determining the agenda and dynamics of political events in the country' (Slavujević, 1998: 101), and, given that neither the DS nor DEPOS made the national question a central element of their campaigns, also illustrates

the difficulties that the opposition had in terms of maintaining a zone of ideological autonomy against the regime and influencing the political agenda.

The creation of Serb entities in Bosnia and Croatia allowed the regime to claim that Serb interests had been successfully defended, and it was greatly helped in this regard by the change in international policy with respect to Bosnia which now accepted that a resolution to that conflict would involve the partition of Bosnia's territory along ethnic lines. As Slavujević points out, within Serbia 'the belief was spreading that by military successes the Serbian people in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina had been defended effectively, that the Serbian national and state issue was all but solved, and that the lifting or at least softening of sanctions was imminent when the combat calmed down' (Slavujević, 1998: 100-101). In such an atmosphere, Goati argues, the opposition parties, for reasons of pragmatism, refrained from attacking the regime for instigating the conflict in Bosnia and for causing sanctions to be imposed, pointing out that:

Persistence in denunciation of the ruling regime for [the] breakout of war [in Bosnia and Croatia] in times when Serbs have practically accomplished their goals in those republics – would expose the opposition parties to the danger of being accused by the regime's media for 'national treachery' (Goati, 2001a: 122).

As such, while the change in the opposition's approach of attacking the regime for bringing about the imposition of international sanctions, to accepting the regime's interpretation of the sanctions as undeserved clearly damaged the opposition, it must be noted that given the conditions in which they were forced to operate, the democratic opposition parties had little room to manoeuvre.

Forming the government

Although the SPS emerged as the largest party following the 1993 elections, it was nevertheless three seats short of a parliamentary majority and so, on 21 January, Milošević issued an invitation to several opposition parties to discuss the formation of a government of national unity. The invitation was accepted by Djindjić and Drašković among others, but rejected by Koštunica (Milošević, 1994: 1). Ultimately, discussions with Drašković and Djindjić proved unsuccessful. Milošević, however, was saved when the six ND deputies, who had fought the election as part of the DEPOS coalition, opted to join the new government. The ND deputies justified their decision to participate in a coalition government with Milošević on the grounds that it would be easier to change the situation in Serbia from the inside, though as Anastasijević points out this claim 'rang hollow since they profited disproportionately from their deal with Milošević. This small party got four ministerial seats and access to material resources it could never have dreamt of while in opposition' (Anastasijević, 2000: 42). In addition to the defection of the ND representatives, the new government attracted the support of two DS members, Radoje Djukić and Slobodan Radulović, who left their party to participate in the coalition. The success of the SPS in attracting support from some former opposition deputies enabled the regime to claim that the newly formed cabinet was based on principals of national unity (Markotich, 1994: 8).

Conclusions

Differences between the democratic opposition parties and the Milošević regime

The issue that was of greatest importance to the IC in its dealings with Serbia between 1993 and 1995 was again the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. The tightening of sanctions that occurred in April 1993 resulted from the Bosnian Serbs' rejection of the VOPP, while the suspension of certain sanctions in 1994, the indefinite suspension of all sanctions in 1995, and the permanent lifting in sanctions in 1996 were effectively rewards to the Milošević regime for co-operation in international efforts to bring the conflict in Bosnia to an end. While for a brief period in 1993, following Drašković's arrest, Serbia's internal political order became the subject of international attention, once the situation had been resolved, and Drašković was released from prison, the undemocratic nature of the Milošević regime no longer featured on the international agenda.

The democratic opposition parties began 1993 with the relatively moderate positions regarding the Serbian national question that they had held throughout 1992. However, over the course of 1993 and 1994 this began to change as first the DSS and then the DS became increasingly vocal in their support for the creation of a greater Serbia. While neither party openly and explicitly advocated the use of force to bring about a greater Serbia, from 1994 both spoke out in favour of the Bosnian Serb leadership's rejection of international peace plans, and argued that Serb gains in Bosnia and Croatia ought to be defended. As such, both the DS and the DSS held views that were considerably at odds with those of the IC.

Both the GSS and the SPO supported all the major peace plans that were proposed to resolve the Bosnian conflict, and generally maintained the moderate positions that they had held in 1992. Drašković, however, was somewhat inconsistent on this issue as at times he engaged in nationalist rhetoric, such as his claim before the 1993 elections that Sarajevo, Mostar and Pakrac would soon be part of Serbia. The contradiction between his support of international peace plans while also making such claims can only have undermined his credibility in the eyes of the IC. Nevertheless, Drašković's nationalist outbursts notwithstanding, both the GSS and the SPO, united within DEPOS, held positions that were broadly in line with those of the IC, and as such did present a credible alternative from an IC perspective.

While the SPO and the GSS did, on balance, maintain positions that were close to those of the IC, in 1993 the Milošević regime abandoned its support for the creation of a greater Serbia through force, and began to support international policies that were designed to bring the fighting in Bosnia to an end. As such, the IC had little incentive to work with the democratic opposition parties against the regime, and is likely to have concluded that maintaining the status quo was the surest way to achieve its goal of ending the fighting in Bosnia. The need for democratic reform in Serbia and the possibility of regime change were not on the international agenda at this time, as is clear by the lack of international attention paid to the 1993 elections.

The relationship between the IC and the democratic opposition parties

As was the case throughout 1992, this time period began with little formal contact between the democratic opposition parties and the IC. The exception to this was during

mid-1993 when IC representatives met with representatives of the democratic opposition parties as part of their efforts to secure the release of Drašković. While this certainly raised the profile of the democratic opposition parties, and particularly that of Drašković and the SPO, it did not result in sustained or regular contact between the democratic opposition parties and the IC, and also did not lead to Serbia's internal political order appearing regularly on the international agenda. This is clearly evident in the lack of international attention that the December 1993 elections received and the total lack of support, either explicit or implied, for the opposition in its attempts to challenge Milošević's SPS at this time.

While the IC paid little attention to Serbia's democratic opposition, the opposition parties became increasingly critical of the IC and its policies with respect to Bosnia. All the parties considered here were critical of the decision to tighten sanctions against the SRJ in 1993. Furthermore, while in the previous time period much of this criticism was directed at Milošević, in 1993 the IC became the main focus of opposition criticism. Some democratic opposition leaders voiced concern that international policy may have a detrimental impact on the prospects for democratic transformation in Serbia. Both the GSS and the SPO were highly critical in this regard, as is evident in their reactions to the abandonment of the VOPP and the acceptance of the ethnic division of Bosnia. The GSS and the SPO also argued that international sanctions were strengthening rather than weakening Milošević, and expressed concern that the IC accepted Milošević as a peacemaker and a guarantor of Balkan stability; in the process reducing incentives for the opposition to support IC positions as a means of opposing Milošević.

The impact of IC policy on the democratic opposition parties

As has been outlined above, between 1993 and 1995 the democratic opposition parties challenged the Milošević regime on only two occasions, both in 1993. In the first of these challenges, the campaign to secure Drašković's release, the opposition was successful. As has been noted, international support in this campaign was a crucial, and probably decisive factor accounting for this success. The democratic opposition parties appeal to the IC to intervene in support of the campaign to secure Drašković's release constituted a clear attempt to question the regime's legitimacy in the international arena by highlighting its undemocratic behaviour, and to raise the costs to Milošević of his authoritarian rule by jeopardising his attempts to forge a more co-operative relationship with the IC in his quest to get sanctions removed. That Milošević backed down and released Drašković, citing the damage that was being done to Serbia's international relations, indicates that in this regard the democratic opposition parties carried out this particular task successfully. In addition, as soon as the war in Bosnia ended, the democratic opposition parties began to raise the issue of Serbia's need for democratic reform at the international level, and appealed to the IC to focus attention on this matter. This contrasts somewhat with the situation in 1992 where there is little evidence that the democratic opposition parties sought international assistance.

The second challenge to the Milošević regime came in the December 1993 elections for the Serbian parliament, in which the democratic opposition parties failed to unseat the regime. Among the factors that contributed to this failure were the disunity of the opposition and its inability to present a credible alternative to the SPS, two of the

most important weaknesses of the opposition identified in chapter one. The inability of the democratic opposition parties to present a credible alternative to the regime derived in part from its disunity. However, other factors such as its lack of a clear programme indicating how it intended to fulfil its campaign promises and its change in position in relation to responsibility for Serbia's economic chaos, also undermined the opposition in this regard. Given the IC's almost total lack of attention to the 1993 election, it had no direct impact on the democratic opposition parties' campaigns. However, existing tensions between the opposition parties were exacerbated by its differences with respect to the efforts of the IC to deal with the conflict in Bosnia, most notably the VOPP and the Contact Group peace plan, and as such, albeit unintentionally, international policy did contribute to undermining the efforts of the democratic opposition parties to effectively challenge the regime. Furthermore, there is no evidence that the IC made any effort to engage with the democratic opposition in order to gain their support for its efforts to resolve the Bosnian conflict.

During the time period covered by this case study, Serbia's democratic opposition parties were less successful in carrying out the four tasks necessary to effectively oppose the regime than they had been in 1992 (resisting integration; maintaining a zone of ideological autonomy; questioning the legitimacy of the regime and raising the costs of authoritarian rule; and presenting a credible alternative both domestically and internationally). While all the parties considered here did resist integration into the regime, Milošević was only able to form a government through co-opting the small ND party that had contested the elections as part of the DEPOS coalition. Furthermore, after the elections, both the SPO and the DS accepted negotiations with the regime with a view

to forming a coalition government and as such considered offering support to the SPS, or at the very least did not rule it out. Thus, while ultimately they did successfully resist integration, they moved closer to failure in this regard than had been the case in 1992.

While the democratic opposition parties did achieve some success in terms of questioning the legitimacy of the Milošević regime and raising the costs of authoritarian rule at the international level, it was less successful at carrying out this task at the domestic level. In contrast to 1992, when the opposition criticised the regime for the imposition of sanctions against Serbia, thereby highlighting the costs to Serbia of Milošević's war policies, this was not a feature of the 1993 election campaign. As outlined above, in 1993 the opposition parties chose to emphasise the failure of the regime to adequately manage the economy rather than highlight the way in which Milošević's policies had brought about the catastrophic predicament in which Serbia found itself. As such, the democratic opposition parties facilitated the regime's attempts to blame international policy, UN sanctions and an international conspiracy against Serbia for the economic chaos, and to put forward the argument that, in such conditions no other government could have done more. However, while the opposition parties may have contributed to this perception, a far more significant factor was Milošević's formidable propaganda machinery.

Milošević's propaganda machinery and control over much of Serbia's media also hindered the opposition in terms of maintaining a zone of ideological autonomy against the regime and influencing the political agenda. That the national question, on which Milošević could claim some success, dominated the agenda while Serbia was experiencing one of the most severe incidences of hyperinflation ever recorded, is clear

evidence of the opposition's failure in this regard. As in the previous time period, international policy, which also highlighted the national question in most of its dealings with Serbia, facilitated Milošević in maintaining the focus of political discourse on the national question. Although for a brief period in 1993 the IC focused its attention on Serbia's internal political order, and in so doing forced Milošević to make concessions in this area, it did not take the opportunity to highlight the undemocratic nature of the regime in its future dealings with Serbia. Had it done so, this may have helped the opposition parties in terms of ensuring that issues that would be of benefit to them, and detrimental to the regime, featured more prominently on the political agenda. As such, at the very least, IC policy did nothing to help the democratic opposition parties in terms of influencing the agenda on which the elections were contested, and may in fact have undermined them in this regard.

A further impact of international policy that was detrimental to the opposition was the abandonment of the IC's previous position that a resolution to the Bosnian conflict must involve preserving the country as a unitary state. By accepting the future ethnic division of Bosnia the IC, in essence, recognised the de facto existence of RS, and enabled Milošević to claim that Serb interests had been successfully defended, and his national policy had been a success, thereby increasing the regime's credibility, while at the same time undermining those who had been opposed to the war from the outset.

The democratic opposition also failed in the task of presenting a credible alternative to the regime domestically, and, at least with respect to the DS and the DSS, was less successful in this regard internationally than had been the case in 1992. The disunity of the opposition resulted in the three most significant opposition parties

contesting the December 1993 elections separately, thus not providing a clear and credible alternative to the regime. Furthermore, DEPOS, the largest of the democratic opposition organisations, also failed to produce a credible alternative programme demonstrating how it would fulfil the promises that it was making. This, in addition to making clearly unrealistic promises and Drašković's inconsistent statements in relation to the national question, can only have undermined the credibility of the coalition in the minds of the electorate. In addition, the increasingly nationalist position of both the DS and the DSS, together with its disunity, also meant that the opposition appeared less credible as an alternative from an IC perspective than it had the previous year. However, notwithstanding Drašković's occasional nationalist outbursts, both the SPO and the GSS, united within DEPOS, held positions that were broadly in line with those of the IC, and as such, these parties can be considered to have been a credible alternative partner from an IC perspective.

In summary, while the failure of the democratic opposition parties to mount an effective challenge to the regime derived to a great extent from its own weaknesses and also the considerable power of the Milošević regime, international policy, unintentionally, acted to exacerbate the opposition's weaknesses and also undermined the opposition in its attempts to carry out the tasks necessary to effectively oppose the regime that were identified in chapter one.

Chapter 5: Zajedno

This case study deals with the time period following the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement until the elections that were held for the Serbian parliament and presidency at the end of 1997. Throughout this time period Serbia enjoyed a relatively high degree of international integration following the lifting of the UN sanctions that had been imposed during the Bosnian war, although an 'outer wall' of sanctions remained in place. These sanctions were maintained primarily by the US, and blocked the SRJ from membership of international organisations such as the OSCE and NATO's Partnership for Peace, in addition to preventing it from joining or having access to lending from international financial institutions such as the IMF, the World Bank and the EBRD (International Crisis Group, 2000: 2). In addition, the EU imposed an arms embargo against the SRJ in March 1996.¹

Following the signing of the Dayton agreement in 1995, the democratic opposition parties succeeded in overcoming some of the differences that had divided them in the previous time period, and formed a coalition - Zajedno (Together), to contest federal and local elections that were held towards the end of 1996, and this was the first major challenge to the Milošević regime in the time period covered by this case study. While Zajedno failed to beat the SPS and its allies in the federal elections, the coalition was surprisingly successful at the local level, winning in most of Serbia's major towns and cities, including Belgrade. The attempts of the Milošević regime to overturn these victories led to the second major opposition challenge to the Milošević regime at this

¹ *European Report*, 28 February 1996.

time: over three months of anti-regime protests that received significant international attention, seriously undermining Milošević's international credibility while at the same time greatly increasing the international profile of the democratic opposition parties. However, once the demonstrations had ended and the opposition parties took power in the local administrations in the spring of 1997, the internal divisions that existed within Zajedno became insurmountable and the coalition had ceased to exist by the time elections for the Serbian presidency and parliament took place at the end of 1997. Of the democratic opposition parties considered here, only the SPO contested the 1997 elections, while the others boycotted them on the grounds that the electoral conditions were unfair.

The key issues for the IC in its relations with Serbia in this time period were the implementation of the Dayton agreement; the situation in Kosovo; and, following the annulment of the opposition's victories in the local elections in 1996, the need for democratic reform within Serbia. The time period covering this case study saw a significant increase in contacts between the Serbian opposition parties and the IC, and a considerable raising of the opposition's profile on the international stage. As such this case study provides the opportunity to examine the extent to which this enhanced status of the opposition parties impacted on the democratic opposition parties' effectiveness in their campaigns against the Milošević regime.

Key Issues for the International Community

In its dealings with Serbia throughout 1996 and 1997, the IC focused on three main issues: the implementation of the Dayton agreement, the situation in Kosovo, and, following the attempt of the Milošević regime to annul the results of local elections that were held in late 1996, the need for those election results to be respected and for democratic reform in Serbia. While the situation in Kosovo was one of the stated reasons for the maintenance of the 'outer wall' of sanctions, this will be discussed in detail in chapter 6 and so will not be considered here. During this time period, the international institutions and actors that were most involved in dealing with Serbia were the US, the EU and its member states, and, to a lesser extent, the OSCE.

The Serbian opposition and the Dayton agreement

The issue that received the greatest amount of international attention in 1996 and 1997 was the implementation of the Dayton agreement, with emphasis on the need to co-operate with the ICTY, and this dominated most of the meetings between the IC and the Serbian authorities. As such, at least throughout 1996, when Milošević was subjected to international criticism and pressure this generally related to his failure to honour the commitments that he made when he signed the agreement. For example, when US State Department official John Kornblum met with Milošević in late May 1996 and threatened the Serbian president with renewed sanctions, this was intended to compel him to push for full implementation of Dayton and to use his influence to force Karadžić to resign

from political life in Bosnia.² In addition, the EU identified implementation of the Dayton agreement as the 'overriding objective of action of the EU' in the SRJ and other former Yugoslav states when it outlined a set of principles on which future relations between the EU and these states would be based.³

In relation to the differences between the democratic opposition parties and the Milošević regime regarding attitudes to the Dayton agreement, the opposition parties involved in the Zajedno coalition made efforts to assure the IC that, should they take power, they would honour this agreement. While the GSS and the SPO could point to the fact that they had opposed the war in Bosnia from the outset and had consistently supported international peace plans as evidence of their willingness to ensure that the Dayton agreement was implemented, the situation was more difficult for the DS and the DSS. To a large extent, however, the DSS was marginalized throughout this time period as it remained outside the Zajedno coalition for most of the time, only reluctantly contesting the 1996 federal elections as part of the coalition and leaving shortly afterwards. The DSS decision to remain independent of the Zajedno coalition was taken as a result of policy differences with the Zajedno parties, and in particular differences regarding national policy and relations with the West.

The nationalist position adopted by the DS during the war in Bosnia was interpreted by some commentators as being merely a pragmatic move, and Djindjić's comments during the time period covered by this case study support this interpretation. In late 1996 Djindjić, argued that 'Any politician in Serbia had to show solidarity with the

² Agence France Presse, 1 June 1996

³ 'Commission Defines Principles for Future Contractual Relations with Certain Countries in South Eastern Europe,' IP/96/876, 2 October 1996.

Bosnian Serbs during the war. It is not our choice who their leaders are,'⁴ and claimed that some degree of nationalism was essential in order to push through the reforms that the DS was committed to making. Djindjić argued that the use of nationalism was essential in order to build popular support, but asserted that 'Europe and the United States should not make too much of this. We will honour the Dayton agreement, and we will not incorporate Serbian-held Bosnia into Serbia as long as this is opposed by our Western friends.'⁵ Furthermore, Djindjić summarised his and his party's vision of a post-Milošević Serbia as: 'No Greater Serbia; respect of the Bosnian peace accord; a law-based state; a market economy; freedom of all kinds.'⁶ Djindjić clearly saw that guarantees of opposition support for the Dayton agreement were a pragmatic necessity if the opposition was to attract international support, noting that respect for the agreement was 'the key that will open the doors of Europe to us.'⁷

In addition to emphasising its willingness to respect the Dayton agreement, the Zajedno leaders also made efforts to counter any belief that might exist within the IC that Milošević represented a factor for stability within the region, or that only with Milošević in power could the Dayton agreement be guaranteed. According to Drašković, the 'United States is committing the gravest error in believing that Serbia and its president can be a stabilising factor in the Balkans. This state mafia is the biggest factor of instability in Serbia and the region. ... There cannot be double criteria. ... You cannot

⁴ *The Guardian* (London), 17 December 1996. Djindjić also emphasised that he was not the only one who dealt with Karadžić, stating that 'I would say at that time most Western European diplomats had the same contact with the same person.' (ORF TV, Vienna, 27 January 1997 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2829/A, 29 January 1997).

⁵ *New York Times*, 1 December 1996

⁶ The Associated Press, 29 November 1996

⁷ Rai Radio 1, Rome, 29 November 1996 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2784/A, 2 December 1996

support a democratic America and a totalitarian Serbia at the same time.⁸ Djindjić also argued that 'The West is wrong to see Milošević as a factor of stability.'⁹ Koštunica also criticised the IC's lack of concern regarding the undemocratic nature of the Milošević regime, claiming that:

The position of the West has changed since 1989. Then they insisted on respect for human rights, a democratic society, and the creation of equal conditions for the organisation of political parties. ... I think that their criteria have now been lowered and have contracted to just one formal position – a democracy exists where there is more than one party and where elections take place.¹⁰

It was not only the democratic opposition parties who believed that the IC considered Milošević to be an important guarantor of the Dayton agreement. Similar sentiments were expressed by several prominent US observers, some with extensive experience in the Balkans.¹¹ Warren Zimmermann, who was the last US ambassador to the SFRJ, argued that the opposition parties would be more likely to honour Dayton than the Milošević regime. Claiming that the US had become 'so transfixed with the view that Milošević is the guarantor of the Dayton Agreement that we've forgotten ... that he has not been very good at guaranteeing the Dayton Agreement,' he stated that 'we would do

⁸ Agence France Presse, 24 November 1996. Similarly, regarding Bosnia Drašković asked: 'How can the butcher of the Balkans become a peacemaker? America is wrong if it thinks that the one who destroyed Bosnia can now be the only guarantee for its peace ... No one should trust this guy, especially not America' (The Associated Press, 5 December 1996).

⁹ *The Washington Post*, 25 November 1996

¹⁰ Koštunica quoted in Thomas, 1999, pp. 260-261

¹¹ The view that the US administration had in some sense supported Milošević because of his role in Dayton was also voiced by Kenneth Roth, the executive director of Human Rights Watch who stated that, 'The Clinton administration adopted a deferential approach toward Milošević because they saw him as the key player in the Dayton process' (*The Washington Post*, 5 December 1996).

much better in terms of the Bosnian peace process with either [Djindjić or Drašković] in power than we will do with Milošević'.¹²

In summary, while the opposition parties comprising Zajedno expressed a willingness to implement Dayton should they come to power, Milošević was subject to frequent international criticism and pressure over his failure to honour the commitments that he made when he signed the agreement. As such, it could be argued that the opposition parties that were involved in the Zajedno coalition did have a different position on this issue than did the Milošević regime, which although it claimed to be committed to the Dayton agreement, was frequently criticised for not fully complying with its provisions. Furthermore, the position of the democratic opposition parties was closer to that of the IC than was the regime's and as such the democratic opposition, in this case the Zajedno coalition, did represent a credible alternative to the Milošević regime from an IC perspective.

The Undemocratic Nature of the Milošević Regime

While the undemocratic nature of the Milošević regime would become a key issue for the IC following the annulment of local election results at the end of 1996, prior to this, although the need for democratic reform was mentioned in numerous IC statements, it was not a priority issue in IC dealings with Serbia. In April 1996, the EU clearly

¹² The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer, Monday Transcript # 5711, 2 December 1996. Zimmermann presented similar arguments a couple of days later, stating that 'The disappearance of Milošević and his replacement by someone from the opposition would be a substantial advantage for Serbia, for peace in the Balkans. It would be an enormously positive event' (The Associated Press, 5 December 1996). Similar arguments were also made by former National Security Advisor, Zbigniew Brzezinski who argued that it would help the peace process in Bosnia if Milošević were to fall because Serbia would be 'ruled by people who think the war was a crime'. He went on to state that 'We ought to make it as clear and as forcefully as we can that we support the democratic forces' (The Washington Times, 5 December 1996).

identified the issues that were most significant in its dealings with Serbia in a declaration on the possibility of EU recognition of the SRJ.¹³ The issues identified included implementation of the Dayton agreement, including co-operation with the ICTY; recognition of all other former Yugoslav republics; agreement on succession issues with the other former Yugoslav republics; and implementation of the peace agreement for Eastern Slavonia. While the final condition specified the need for 'full respect for human rights, minority rights and ... the granting of a large degree of autonomy for Kosovo within the [SRJ],' which may imply the need for a more democratic political system, there was no explicit mention of the need for democratic reform within Serbia.¹⁴

Further evidence of the lack of priority given to this issue can also be seen in US and EU statements that were made shortly before elections were held in 1996. US ambassador to the UN, Madeleine Albright, stated in October 1996 that the US would continue to be against Yugoslavia's participation in international financial institutions until it co-operated with the ICTY, made 'substantial progress' in resolving the tensions in Kosovo, and tried to settle claims over assets with other former-Yugoslav states, but did not call for democratic reform in Serbia and did not mention the elections that were scheduled to take place in November.¹⁵ Similarly, the conclusion of an EU Council of Ministers meeting on 1 October 1996 included a section on the former Yugoslavia which mentioned the importance of the implementation of Dayton and the forthcoming elections in Bosnia, and also noted that the Council had discussed the situation in Kosovo, but

¹³ The SRJ had already been formally recognised by a number of European states including Germany, France, the UK, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, Portugal and Italy (*European Report*, European Information Service, 20 April 1996).

¹⁴ 'Declaration by the Presidency on Behalf of the European Union on Recognition by EU Member States of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia,' PESC/96/30, 9 April 1996.

¹⁵ The Associated Press, 1 October 1996.

made no mention of the forthcoming elections in the SRJ or the undemocratic nature of the Milošević regime. On the contrary, if anything, the EU press release praised the SRJ authorities, mentioning 'the important role of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Republic of Croatia both in terms of the peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in terms of the stability in the wider region.'¹⁶

However, while the need for democratic reform in Serbia was not a regular issue on the international agenda in 1996, it was not entirely ignored either, and the undemocratic nature of the Milošević regime was noted on occasion. One example of this came in November when Assistant Secretary of State with responsibility for human rights issues, John Shattuck, visited Serbia and met with Milošević. While the negotiations between the two men centred on the need for Serbia to cooperate with the ICTY, Shattuck also alluded to the need for changes within Serbia, stating that the US was prepared to support the SRJ's readmission to the international financial institutions 'if there is full cooperation with the international tribunal in the Hague and progress on human rights in Kosovo as well as in Serbia.'¹⁷ Similarly, John Kornblum, on a visit to Belgrade on 12 November also mentioned the need for democratic reform within Serbia, stating that the US believed that 'complete freedom of the press needs to be established' and that 'economic and political liberalisation must come to this country.'¹⁸

While the IC did not place significant emphasis on the need for democratic reform before the protests that took place at the end of 1996, one aspect of Milošević's repressive rule did receive some degree of attention early in 1996 and that was repression of the independent media. One of the most significant events in this regard was the

¹⁶ RAPID, Council of Ministers Press Release, 1 October 1996

¹⁷ Agence France Presse, 7 November 1996

¹⁸ United Press International, 12 November 1996

takeover of the independent television station Studio B on 15 February.¹⁹ When Studio B was taken over, the democratic opposition parties appealed for international support, and Drašković and Pešić met with US and EU officials in Belgrade, again showing its readiness to highlight the undemocratic nature of the regime at the international level.²⁰

The IC reacted to the takeover of Studio B by condemning the action, and asking that independent control be returned to the station. A State Department spokesperson described the action as a 'transparent attempt by authorities there to limit access to uncensored news and information,'²¹ while the EU issued a statement expressing concern.²² However, while the West was willing to criticise the regime's actions, no concrete measures were taken in order to try to force Milošević to reverse the decision.²³

Milošević certainly seemed undeterred by internal and external protests over the Studio B takeover, as the following week he was subject to further criticism when, on 23 February, the Supreme Court upheld a decision by the Serbian Ministry of Culture nullifying the official registration of the Soros Foundation, thereby preventing it from undertaking any further work in the SRJ.²⁴ Although the State Department's reaction to the closure of the Soros Foundation offices did not go beyond condemnation, it was,

¹⁹ Serbia's Supreme Court ruled that Studio B had been incorrectly privatised and would be returned to social ownership under the control of the Belgrade city assembly ('Media: The Tamed Studio B', Milan Milošević, *Vreme NDA* No. 229: 26 February 1996).

²⁰ Associated Press Worldstream, 16 February 1996

²¹ US Department of State Regular Briefing, 16 February 1996

²² 'Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on Independent Media in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia' PESC/96/20, 6 March 1996. Further criticism came from UNESCO (United Press International, 16 February 1996)

²³ Unwillingness on the part of some IC actors to push the point too heavily was evident in comments by France's ambassador to Yugoslavia in an interview with local media. The ambassador was asked whether there would be international pressure on Milošević to preserve the freedom of the independent media and replied that: 'I don't like the word pressure. We want to help – if that's your aim, here is a way to accomplish it' ('Good and Bad Signs', Gabriel Keller interviewed by Roksanda Ninčić, *Vreme News Digest Agency* No. 231, 12 March 1996).

²⁴ The End of the Soros Foundation, Dejan Anastasijević, *Vreme News Digest Agency* No. 230, 5 March 1996

nevertheless, to some extent more forceful than had been the case with the closure of Studio B. Unlike in the case of Studio B, the State Department linked the closure of the Soros Foundation offices to the possibility of lifting the outer wall of sanctions, with a spokesperson stating that Serbia would be 'denied the full measure of membership in various international organizations and recognition from the United States if it does not reverse this disturbing trend that we've seen of anti-democratic measures.'²⁵ The somewhat stronger international reaction to this move, in particular from the US, and the subsequent reopening of the Soros foundation under a different name,²⁶ suggests that the IC, if it chose to exert pressure on Milošević, could indeed influence his actions.

Following Milošević's attempts to deny the Zajedno coalition its victories in the 1996 local elections, and the large anti-regime protests that followed, Serbia's internal political order received an unprecedented level of international attention, with all the key international actors and institutions commenting on these developments, and condemning the regime for its undemocratic behaviour, and this will be discussed in detail later in this chapter. While initially the response of the IC to the electoral fraud was rather mild, as the protests continued the IC became increasingly critical of the Milošević regime, and threatened to increase the level of Serbia's international isolation if the situation were not resolved. While this issue was clearly of importance to the IC, the differences between the democratic opposition parties and the Milošević regime in relation to the annulment of the election results and the undemocratic nature of the Milošević regime are self-evident.

²⁵ US Department of State Daily Press Briefing, 4 March 1996

²⁶ In June 1996 the Soros Foundation was allowed to reregister in the SRJ as the Foundation for Open Society (Associated Press Worldstream, 11 June 1996).

In summary, in spite of the fact that the war in Bosnia had ended in 1995, Bosnia remained the most significant issue for the IC in its dealings with Serbia and the need for Serbia to fulfil its obligations under the Dayton agreement was the single most important issue for the IC during this time period. However, while democratic reform was not identified as a high priority in the immediate post-Dayton period, there was, nevertheless, some degree of international recognition that this was an area in which the Milošević regime was clearly deficient. As such, although not emphasised as a key issue, IC representatives mentioned the need for democratic reform on occasion, and the IC condemned explicitly repressive measures such as the take over of Studio B, although no punitive action was taken.

Challenges to the Milošević regime

The 1996 federal and local elections

Serbia's democratic opposition parties entered the post-Dayton period in some disarray. The differences that had plagued them between 1993 and 1995 left the democratic opposition disunited with tensions not just between the parties but also within them. While splits occurred within the DS and the GSS, in spite of their differences, and with federal and local elections due to take place in 1996, there was a feeling among the democratic opposition parties that defeating the Milošević regime would require a degree

of opposition co-operation.²⁷

While from early 1996 the SPO, the DS and the GSS had been co-operating in organising joint activities in preparation for the federal elections,²⁸ the announcement, on 14 August, that federal elections would take place on 3 November, provided an added impetus to formalise this co-operation in order to create an opposition electoral coalition to challenge the SPS, and on 2 September the Zajedno coalition formally came into existence. While Koštunica had spoken in favour of opposition unity to fight the regime, arguing that this was made all the more important by the fact that the 'regime is still operating and needed by external forces in the implementation of the Dayton accords',²⁹ the DSS decided not to join the opposition alliance, voting on 8 September to contest the federal elections alone.³⁰ Koštunica was opposed to his party joining the coalition on the grounds of political differences between the DSS and the SPO.³¹

Having reached an agreement regarding participation in the forthcoming elections, the Zajedno leaders then approached Dragoslav Avramović, to head the

²⁷ Attempts at opposition co-operation had begun in December 1995 when the DS, DSS, and two smaller parties formed a coalition known as the Democratic Alternative (Thomas, 1999: 255). In addition, all of the opposition parties represented in the Serbian parliament had cooperated in protesting against a ban on live TV coverage of the parliament (Tanjug, 13 December 1995 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2487/A, 14 December 1995; The Associated Press, 26 December 1995).

²⁸ The first demonstration organised by the parties took place in Belgrade in March to mark the fifth anniversary of the March 1991 anti-regime protests. ('Who's Lying?' Milan Milošević, *Vreme News Digest Agency* No. 232, 19 March 1996; United Press International, 9 March 1996). Further joint demonstrations were held throughout Serbia in the following weeks and months.

²⁹ *Naša Borba*, 5 March 1996 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2554/A, 6 March 1996. Koštunica's statement that Milošević 'was needed by external forces' for the implementation of the Dayton agreement was an expression of an underlying feeling among much of the opposition that Milošević was in some sense supported by the IC. Although at this point this was not a major theme in opposition rhetoric it would become so in the following months.

³⁰ The decision was taken with 91 members voting against joining Zajedno, 32 voting in favour, and 15 abstaining (Tanjug, 8 September 1996 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2713/A, 10 September 1996).

³¹ 'Koštunica Out of the Game?', Milan Milošević, *Vreme News Digest Agency* No. 258, 15 September 1996. The issue of whether or not the DSS should contest the elections as part of Zajedno was the source of some conflict within the party, with some senior party members supporting participation.

coalition.³² Avramović, however, insisted that if he were to lead Zajedno in the federal elections, the DSS must be part of the coalition, and threatened to withdraw and publicly blame the DSS if it did not participate. This pressure paid off, and on 1 October it was announced that the DSS would contest the federal elections as a member of the Zajedno coalition.³³ Zajedno's leaders hoped that their chances of success in the elections would be considerably boosted by Avramović's participation, and in October, opinion polls indicated that Avramović was the most popular political figure in the country for 43% of the population, while Milošević was favoured by only 29% (Thomas, 1999: 279). Zajedno was dealt a severe blow, however, when, on 9 October, Avramović announced that he would be withdrawing from the coalition, citing ill health as the reason for his decision. Although the claims that he was withdrawing for health reasons were widely disbelieved, Avramović never revealed any further reasons for his withdrawal, and even Pešić states that she never discovered why he had decided to do so (Pešić, 2000 173). However, in spite of Avramović's departure the Zajedno coalition survived and managed to remain intact to contest the federal elections. The DSS contested the federal elections as part of the Zajedno coalition, but participated independently at the local level.

In contrast to earlier elections where the national question had predominated, the central themes in the 1996 election campaigns were Serbia's economic and social problems. As Sekelj notes, this shift was brought about by the SPS itself (Sekelj, 2000: 67). The election campaign of the SPS was centred on economic recovery and social

³² FoNet news agency, 24 September 1996 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2727/A, 26 September 1996. Avramović was a highly popular and well-respected figure within Serbia at the time. As former governor of the Yugoslav national bank he had introduced a stabilisation programme that brought the country's hyperinflation under control.

³³ Koštunica cited the changes to the federal electoral law and Avramović's threat to withdraw from the political scene as key factors influencing the DSS to alter its position with regard to participation in Zajedno. See 'Opposition and the Elections,' Uroš Komlenović, *Vreme News Digest Agency* No. 261, 6 October 1996.

development, with the campaign slogan 'Serbia 2000: a Step into the New Century' (Slavujević, 1998: 105). The democratic opposition parties followed suit and also did not focus on the national question. Indeed, as Slavujević notes, these parties 'did not even call the regime to account' for the loss of Serb held territories in Croatia and Bosnia or the mass exodus of Serbs from Krajina (Slavujević, 1998: 106).³⁴

During the election campaign the democratic opposition parties became increasingly frustrated and angry at what they considered to be international support for Milošević's SPS party in the elections, reflecting a general belief that the West considered Milošević to be a guarantor of the Dayton agreement and therefore did not want to see him removed from power. Among their complaints, the opposition parties criticised western diplomats' apparent willingness to be present on official visits with leading members of the ruling parties during the election campaign. According to a report in the *Washington Post*: 'Throughout the Yugoslav electoral campaign, U.S. envoys visited state-run factories and met with high-ranking officials from Milošević's [SPS], leaving a strong impression that Washington backed the Socialists.'³⁵

Aware that they were facing elections in grossly unfair conditions, the leaders of the Zajedno coalition wanted international supervision of the November elections, and in early October they travelled to Brussels and appealed to Europe and the US to put pressure on Milošević to accept international monitors, again bringing the regime's legitimacy into question at the international level. During a press conference the coalition leaders stated that the west had to choose between supporting Milošević to gain short-

³⁴ Slavujević goes on to point out that following the signing of the Dayton agreement the DS softened its national posture, thereby enabling it to enter the Zajedno coalition, and the DSS, while never renouncing its national policy, could not express its 'national hard line' once it had entered Zajedno (Slavujević, 1998: 106-107).

³⁵ *The Washington Post*, 4 November 1996. See also Thomas, 1999, pp. 281-282.

term stability and supporting the opposition to guarantee long-term peace in the Balkans, and stressed that only with a democratically elected government would it be possible to resolve the conflict in Kosovo.³⁶

Towards the end of October, with no arrangement in place for international monitors, the democratic opposition parties threatened to boycott the elections if they were not given a role in supervising the polls, and accused Milošević of trying to prevent them from playing such a role.³⁷ Furthermore, the democratic opposition parties clearly felt that the IC was not exerting sufficient pressure on Milošević in this regard, going so far as to suggest that the IC, and in particular the US, was plotting with Milošević to ensure that he retained power following the 1996 elections. Drašković accused Milošević of 'arranging with the American government and the European Union to steal the forthcoming elections,'³⁸ while Koštunica declared that 'At this moment and for some reason there is no interest in the West to send observers to Serbia.'³⁹ Senior DS member Slobodan Vuksanović stated that 'We all think Western countries support Milošević and the socialist regime, and now we can freely say the Western world is on their side.'⁴⁰ The Zajedno leaders were so incensed that they sent a letter to the US Embassy in Belgrade in which they asked for 'an immediate, official and public explanation by the American government.'⁴¹

³⁶ Associated Press Worldstream, 8 October 1996

³⁷ Agence France Presse, 25 October 1996. Drašković claimed that Milošević had ordered that Zajedno representatives 'should be thrown out of election committees en masse throughout Serbia' and also alleged that a Niš SPS official, Mile Ilić, had claimed that he received an order from Milošević to 'steal votes', and that this had been agreed with the US (Beta news agency, 25 October 1996 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2754/A, 28 October 1996).

³⁸ Agence France Presse, 25 October 1996.

³⁹ Associated Press Worldstream, 25 October 1996

⁴⁰ *The Christian Science Monitor*, 1 November 1996

⁴¹ Associated Press Worldstream, 25 October 1996

The US embassy vigorously denied the charges, and US diplomat Jack Zetkulić stated that the US had recommended that the OSCE send observers.⁴² The OSCE however, stated that it would only be sending two election experts who would submit a report. The OSCE confirmed that the SRJ authorities had invited observers, but that the invitation had arrived too late to organise 'a meaningful election observation.'⁴³ In the end seventy-six international observers did turn up to monitor the 3 November elections with only days to prepare.⁴⁴

The results of the federal elections were a huge disappointment for the opposition. The SPS-JUL-ND⁴⁵ coalition won 45.41% of the votes and sixty-four seats in the Federal Parliament a significant increase on the 31.5% secured by the SPS when it contested the 1992 federal elections alone. Zajedno gained only 23.81% of the vote and twenty-two parliamentary places which represented the opposition's 'greatest election defeat since 1990,' receiving almost 400,000 fewer votes than the four parties had won in the 1993 Serbian elections (Milošević, 2000: 178). However, compared to the 1992 federal elections, Zajedno received less than 1% fewer votes and three seats less than had DEPOS and the DS in 1992. Goati attributes the success of the SPS-JUL-ND coalition to the ability of the SPS to portray the end of the war in the former Yugoslavia and the lifting of UN sanctions to the 'peace-making policy' of the SPS (Goati, 2001a: 84). Slavujević also highlights this point, noting out that with the 'triumphalist atmosphere that was created following the signing of the Dayton agreement, Serbia's population was 'assured that stopping the war in [Bosnia] would lead to the elimination of sanctions

⁴² Associated Press Worldstream, 25 October 1996.

⁴³ Associated Press Worldstream, 25 October 1996.

⁴⁴ United Press International, 1 November 1996.

⁴⁵ The SPS contested the election as part of the 'left coalition' which included the ND party and JUL, the party of Milošević's wife Mirjana Marković.

since the international community acknowledged the “consequent peace-making policy of the [SRJ], and particularly of the President of Serbia, S. Milošević” (Slavujević, 1998: 105).

Party	PERCENTAGE OF VOTE	Seats
<i>SPS-JUL-ND</i>	45.41%	64 (59.26%)
<i>Zajedno</i>	23.81%	22 (20.37)
<i>SRS</i>	18.78%	16 (14.81)

Table 3: Election results for the Yugoslav Chamber of Citizens election held in Serbia in 1996

While Zajedno was disappointed with the results of the federal election, at the municipal level the coalition did surprisingly well. Following the first round of voting on 3 November, Zajedno was already in the lead in 14 of Serbia’s major cities, including Belgrade, Novi Sad and Niš. After the second round of voting in the local elections held on 17 November this success was confirmed as Zajedno won a majority in 40 of Serbia’s 189 municipalities (Anastasijević, 2000: 46). On 18 November Slobodan Vuksanović announced that Zajedno had won 70 of the 110 seats in the Belgrade city assembly, and called on the SPS to accept the results.⁴⁶ A victory rally was held in Belgrade on 18 November at which Djindjić was introduced as the ‘new mayor of Belgrade’ (Thomas, 1999: 285).

Accounting for the discrepancy between the failure of the democratic opposition at the federal level and their success at the local level, Lazić argues that the regime

⁴⁶ Beta news agency, 18 November 1996 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2774/A, 20 November 1996

enjoyed a number of advantages at the federal level that did not apply in the case of the local elections. He points out that, at the federal level, both the number of electoral units and their boundaries had been specifically designed to favour the SPS; that the opposition had no control over the electoral process at the federal level; and also that the abstention of Albanian voters in Kosovo, where the regime's electoral manipulations were always high, resulted in the regime being able to take all the parliamentary seats for the province (Lazić, 1999: 13). He also notes that in Serbia's urban centres, where Zajedno was most successful, support for the regime was much less than in its strongholds in villages and suburbs. As such, he claims that the Zajedno victories demonstrated the narrow support base of the regime (Lazić, 1999: 13).

While at first it seemed that the SPS was prepared to accept defeat in the local elections, with SPS spokesperson Ivica Dačić going so far as to publicly acknowledge that Zajedno had triumphed in Belgrade, it soon became clear that Milošević and his associates were embarking on what Antonić describes as 'the most unbelievable electoral theft in the political history of Serbia'⁴⁷ (Antonić, 2002: 189). According to Goati, 'the ruling regime in Serbia ... managed through the electoral commissions and courts, to either alter the results of the local elections or cancel them and call ... new elections (Goati, 2001a: 89).'⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Author's translation.

⁴⁸ The regime carried out this electoral theft in two ways. Wherever possible they simply changed the results of the voting to the benefit of the SPS, as happened in Niš, or they annulled the elections in those municipalities where the opposition had won and called for a repeat of the voting, as was the case in Belgrade. For a detailed description of the procedures the regime used to overturn the results of the local elections see Rakić-Vodinić et al, 1997, *Izborna kradja: Pravni aspekt*, Belgrade: Medija Centar. In addition to accusations of electoral fraud on the part of the opposition parties, legal experts and even members of the judiciary were also a source of pressure on Milošević at this time, as they questioned the legality of the regime's actions and complained about its manipulation of the courts. See IPS-Inter Press Service, 25 November 1996 and *Naša Borba*, 3 December 1996, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2787/A, 5 December 1996.

The Winter Protests

The attempts on the part of the authorities to overturn the victories of the Zajedno coalition in the local elections resulted in the largest and most prolonged anti-government protests that had taken place in Serbia since Milošević came to power.⁴⁹ The demonstrations consisted of two separate but parallel protests. The first was that led by the Zajedno coalition, while the second was a protest organised by students, who from the outset emphasised the 'non-party nature of their movement.'⁵⁰ While the students emphasised that they were not affiliated with any political party or coalition, it is also clear that not all the protestors who took part in the Zajedno-led demonstrations considered themselves to be supporters of the coalition.⁵¹

As the DSS had not participated as part of Zajedno in the local elections, the party was somewhat marginalized at this time, but it condemned the actions of the Milošević regime in its attempts to overturn the election result and expressed support for opposition aims to prevent this. A DSS statement issued on 26 November argued that the 'main goal of the opposition should be to have general elections held under regular conditions', and

⁴⁹ Anastasijević summarises the extent of the protests: 'the Zajedno-led protests lasted 88 days, until mid-February 1997, while the parallel student protests lasted for 117 days. Thousands of citizens turned out for the rallies, which were held in some 50 Serbian towns; on some occasions, as many as 300,000 people took to the streets of Belgrade' (Anastasijević, 2000: 47).

⁵⁰ Throughout the duration of the protests the students maintained that they were not affiliated with any political party or coalition, and that their demonstrations were independent of those of the Zajedno rallies, although they did share the same aims in regard to the electoral fraud perpetrated by the regime. The students' demands were widened to include the resignation of Dragan Veličković, the rector of Belgrade University, and Vojin Djurdjević, the student president, following Veličković's claim that there were no student protests but a small group of 'misguided youths' had been gathering in the streets (Beta news agency, 5 December 1996 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2788/A, 6 December 1996).

⁵¹ Research undertaken to determine the political orientation of the protestors indicated that Zajedno supporters accounted for just over half of those who took part (51.5%), and that 30.3% claimed that they were neither members nor sympathisers of any political party. Furthermore, 18% were supporters of opposition parties that were not members of the Zajedno coalition (Babović, 1999: 42).

to this end urged the opposition parties not to accept the seats won in either the federal or local elections, and to return the seats they held in the Serbian parliament.⁵² In mid-January 1997, the DSS decided to formally leave the Zajedno coalition, with Koštunica citing irreconcilable differences in relation to 'solving the state and national issues, the implementation of the Dayton agreement, and the Serbs outside the [SRJ].⁵³ Koštunica did say, however, that the DSS and Zajedno would continue to cooperate, though as two separate political organisations, and asserted that the DSS 'must maintain its individuality and it cannot be part of any political organisation,' not even Zajedno.⁵⁴

The reaction of the IC to the protests

From the outset, the democratic opposition parties had sought the assistance of the IC in defending its election victories against Milošević's attempts to overturn them, with Drašković first appealing to the US and the EU to help ensure that Milošević respect the election results as early as 18 November. EU countries and the US, he stated, 'must force Milošević to respect the election results.'⁵⁵ Furthermore, on 20 November Drašković, Djindjić and Pešić met with representatives of the US and European governments in

⁵² Beta news agency, 26 November 1996 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE//A, 28 November 1996.

⁵³ Blic, 13 January 1997, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2817/A, 15 January 1997. Speaking in December 1996 Koštunica outlined the differences between his party and that parties that were at the core of the Zajedno coalition, demonstrating the more nationalist orientation of the DSS: 'We agree with the Zajedno coalition that the most important aim is democracy. We, however, place priority on solving the questions of the federal state, Kosovo, Vojvodina, Sandžak, the Republika Srpska, the issue of national identity, while Djindjić, Drašković and Pešić place priority on social and economic questions' (Thomas, 1999: 324).

⁵⁴ Blic, 13 January 1997, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2817/A, 15 January 1997

⁵⁵ Agence France Presse, 18 November 1996

Belgrade to discuss the situation.⁵⁶ In a meeting with Richard Miles, Drašković requested that a team of legal experts be sent from the US to Belgrade to help resolve the situation.⁵⁷ The US did not accede to this request.

Calls for international support on the part of Zajedno's leaders reflected the belief within the Serbian opposition that IC support would be very important in terms of getting the elections results recognised. Ilija Djukić, a Zajedno spokesperson on foreign affairs, emphasised that while ultimately the onus lay with the opposition, 'the help and understanding of the international community ... is very important.'⁵⁸ The opposition leaders clearly believed that Milošević would be amenable to international pressure. According to Djindjić: 'Milošević is a typical Balkans dictator and despises his own people. He doesn't care if a million people protest against him, but if President Clinton gives him a call, he will care.'⁵⁹ In a similar vein Drašković stated: 'The American administration knows quite well how to deal with Milošević. If they made him sign peace for Bosnia, they certainly can make him return our election victory.'⁶⁰

While the Zajedno leaders believed that IC support would be an important factor in their campaign to have their electoral victories recognised, it was also the case that they believed that the IC was supporting Milošević because of his role as a signatory of the Dayton peace agreement. This is clear in Djukić's comments on a meeting with IC representatives at the beginning of the protests. Djukić stated that the IC had a 'collision

⁵⁶ Beta news agency, 20 November 1996 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2776/A, 22 November 1996. At this meeting the democratic opposition parties provided the IC representatives with evidence of the electoral manipulation in Niš.

⁵⁷ United Press International, 20 November 1996. Drašković reiterated this request at a rally in Belgrade a week into the protests, stating that 'We invite international experts of the European Union and the American government to come here immediately to see the evidence (of electoral fraud) which we have obtained' (Agence France Presse, 24 November 1996)

⁵⁸ 'All Things Considered', National Public Radio, Transcript # 96112713-212, 27 November 1996

⁵⁹ The Associated Press, 29 November 1996

⁶⁰ The Associated Press, 5 December 1996

of priorities' and was 'squeezed' between a wish to maintain good relations with Milošević because of Dayton, and the recognition that Serbia must democratise.⁶¹ Commenting on the reaction of the IC representatives at the meeting, Djukić stated that: 'They said very little. They need Milošević. He is guaranteeing the Dayton agreement for them.'⁶² Drašković was also critical of the IC at this time, stating that 'They refuse to see the worst sort of crime is being perpetrated here: a crime committed by the state.'⁶³ Similarly, Srdja Popović, who was one of the Zajedno candidates to have his seat overturned by the Belgrade courts, seemed let down by the lack of concrete action on the part of the IC and asked: 'Where are the Western powers? A lot of people were looking to the West, but they are now disappointed. Where are the election observers now?'⁶⁴ One of the leaders of the student protests, Žarko Mihailović, also expressed disappointment with the response of the US, stating that 'As a country that says it supports democratic values we expected more from America.'⁶⁵ There was also some frustration among the protestors themselves with regard to the perception that the West was supporting Milošević. On 27 November an American flag was set alight outside the US embassy in Belgrade, while some protestors carried banners stating that 'US serves communists.'⁶⁶

The initial response of the IC to events in Serbia following the elections of 17 November was muted. As AntoniĆ notes, for the first few days following the elections, the only comments from any IC representatives came in response to direct questions from

⁶¹ *The Washington Post*, 26 November 1996

⁶² *The Guardian* (London), 26 November 1996

⁶³ *The Independent* (London), 26 November 1996

⁶⁴ *The Guardian* (London), 26 November 1996

⁶⁵ *The New York Times*, 28 November 1996

⁶⁶ Associated Press Worldstream, 27 November 1996

journalists⁶⁷ (Antonić, 2002: 194). As events developed, however, the IC became more critical in its response to events in Serbia. The US government was probably the most vocal international critic of the Milošević regime throughout the duration of the protests, and the first international comments on the events in Serbia came from a US State Department spokesperson. Expressing US concern over reports that Milošević had tried to 'affect the process of vote counting,' the spokesperson called for more openness in the process, urging the authorities 'to resolve this issue in a democratic fashion of precisely who won in these various municipalities around Serbia.'⁶⁸ On 27 November the State Department, for the first time, called for Milošević to reverse the decision to annul the elections.⁶⁹

While the US was critical of the Milošević regime's decision to annul the election results, and repeatedly called for this decision to be reversed, initially the US did little other than emphasise that the 'outer wall' of sanctions that the US maintained against the SRJ, would not be removed.⁷⁰ The State Department did emphasise that it also retained the option of trying to have UN sanctions reimposed on the SRJ; though at no point did it take steps in this direction. Furthermore, given Russia's and China's insistence that the local elections were an internal matter for Serbia, the agreement of the Security Council to such a move was unlikely.⁷¹ In addition, the reintroduction of multilateral sanctions would not have been welcomed by the opposition parties, with Pešić noting that Serbia's

⁶⁷ Author's translation

⁶⁸ US Department of State, Daily Press Briefing, 21 November 1996.

⁶⁹ US Department of State, Daily Press Briefing, 27 November 1996.

⁷⁰ US Department of State, Daily Press Briefing, 26 November 1996.

⁷¹ Illustrative of the difficulties that the US would have faced if it had tried to take this course of action, is its failure to persuade the participants at a Peace Implementation Conference in London on 4 and 5 December to issue a statement condemning Serbia (Associated Press Worldstream, 4 December 1996). At this meeting Strobe Talbott met with Milutinović to discuss the situation in Serbia, in what was described as 'a very tough meeting' (US Department of State Daily Press Briefing, 4 December 1996).

renewed isolation would suit Milošević,⁷² while Djindjić pointed out that sanctions had done little to weaken the regime in the past.⁷³ Both leaders argued that any international measures taken should directly target the Milošević regime.⁷⁴

Criticism of the Serbian authorities' actions also came from the White House. On 10 December Clinton stated that the election results should be respected and noted while neither the US 'nor anyone else, would seek to interfere in the internal events in Serbia ... our sympathies are always with free people who are struggling to express their freedom and want to have the integrity of their elections respected.'⁷⁵ Clinton's statement that the US did not want to interfere in Serbia's internal affairs reflected the lack of desire on the part of the US, or any other international actor, to use the issue of Milošević's abuse of the elections to help bring about a change of government in the SRJ.⁷⁶ This was also evident in Christopher's comments when he stated that reform with Milošević in power was not impossible.⁷⁷ Thus, while the US was supportive of the demands that the opposition's election victories should be respected, there was no support for the demands made by some opposition leaders that Milošević should resign.

⁷² 'Mi nećemo sankcije', Pešić interviewed in *NIN*, No. 2389, 13 December 1996. Author's translation.

⁷³ Deutschlandfunk radio, Cologne, 3 January 1997, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2808/A, 4 January 1997.

⁷⁴ 'Mi nećemo sankcije', Pešić interviewed in *NIN*, No. 2389, 13 December 1996 (Author's translation); Deutschlandfunk radio, Cologne, 3 January 1997, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2808/A, 4 January 1997. On a visit to the US in December, Perišić and Labus of the DS also spoke in favour of sanctions targeted against the Milošević regime, with Labus arguing that sanctions could be imposed against the '20 families which own most of Serbia's assets' (Associated Press Worldstream, 11 December 1996). The US rejected these suggestions, with an unnamed US State Department official claiming that this would take too much time, and that 'By the time we identified these assets, they would certainly have melted away'. (Associated Press Worldstream, 11 December 1996).

⁷⁵ Associated Press Worldstream, 10 December 1996.

⁷⁶ A lack of will to interfere in Serbia's internal affairs in this way was also implicit in the remarks made by an unnamed 'UK Foreign Office official' who explained that the issue of the Serbian local elections would not be raised at the PIC in London in early December because Serbia's future must be decided by its own people and not the IC (AFX News, 3 December 1996).

⁷⁷ US Department of State, Press Briefing by Secretary of State Warren Christopher, 9 December 1996.

The US was also quite explicit in stating that it did not support the Serbian opposition per se, but only its demands that the electoral will of Serbia's citizens should be respected. According to State Department spokesperson, Nicholas Burns, 'We have not become here the political backers or supporters of a particular political party in Serbia. We are trying to uphold, along with all our allies in Europe, democratic principles that we think a modern European state should adhere to.'⁷⁸ In this regard it is worth noting that the US continued to call for dialogue between the Serbian government and the opposition in an attempt to resolve the crisis, and did not insist that the election results need to be recognised before this took place.⁷⁹ This was at odds with the position of the Zajedno leaders that dialogue would not be possible until the regime reversed the annulment of the 17 November elections and recognised its victories. Pešić made this clear at the protest meeting on 15 December: 'We cannot haggle with anyone over 17th November. We want to discuss everything, but first of all we want the truth about 17th November. This is a condition above all conditions.'⁸⁰

As the crisis progressed, the US did, to some extent, increase the level of Serbia's diplomatic isolation.⁸¹ A meeting between Kornblum and Milošević, due to take place in December in Belgrade, was cancelled, with the State Department explaining that 'given the current situation ... [Kornblum] decided it would not be appropriate to go to Belgrade

⁷⁸ US Department of State, Daily Press Briefing, 12 December 1996.

⁷⁹ US Department of State, Daily Press Briefing, 12 December 1996.

⁸⁰ Beta news agency, 15 December 1996 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2797/A, 17 December 1996. The same point was also made by Drašković following his meeting with Kornblum in Geneva, when he stated that 'there will be no dialogue with Milošević until he recognises all our election victories' (Associated Press Worldstream, 16 December 1996). Similarly, Djindjić, responding to an initiative from the SPS to hold panel discussion in the Serbian parliament, stated that: 'There is no compromise with them. We have nothing to discuss with the regime which has brought Serbia to the brink of disaster, except the way in which they ought to leave' (Beta news agency, 14 December 1996 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2796/A, 16 December 1996).

⁸¹ In addition, on 6 December President Clinton extended for a further year the sanctions that the US had in place against the SRJ (Agence France Presse, 6 December 1996). However, US dissatisfaction with Serbia over co-operation with the ICTY suggests that this decision would have been taken in any case.

at this time.’⁸² In a show of support for the opposition, Kornblum did, however, meet with Drašković and other Zajedno representatives on 15 December in Geneva, following which he praised the Zajedno leaders, stating that ‘These three leaders are impressive in their discipline, in their goals and in their desire to work with all parts of Yugoslav society to establish a true democracy there.’⁸³

The EU’s response to Milošević’s attempts at electoral fraud was weaker than that of the US, and its first statement addressing the elections angered the Zajedno coalition. The statement, issued on 22 November, ‘noted opposition allegations of irregularities’ and urged that ‘the re-run of the elections in the areas identified by the electoral commission is conducted in full accordance with international democratic norms.’⁸⁴ The Zajedno coalition leaders interpreted the EU’s call that democratic norms be adhered to in the third round of elections as an endorsement of the third round of voting, which the coalition regarded as illegitimate as they had already won the elections. In response to the EU statement, Zajedno sent a strongly worded letter to EU ministers, accusing them of giving a free hand to thieves to steal the elections again. The letter went on to point out that the EU governments knew that voting had been annulled only in towns in which the democratic opposition had won and stated that EU support for the annulling of the elections was ‘strange and incomprehensible’⁸⁵ (Antonić, 2002: 195). A further statement

⁸² US Department of State Daily Press Briefing, 10 December 1996.

⁸³ Associated Press Worldstream, 15 December 1996.

⁸⁴ ‘Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on the local elections in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia,’ 22 November 1996.

⁸⁵ Author’s translation. In contrast, the US State Department’s position regarding the third round of voting was closer to that of Zajedno. At its Daily Press Briefing on 27 November, Burns stated that Milošević had ‘manufactured’ the elections and that ‘holding run-off elections is not acceptable’ (US Department of State, Daily Press Briefing, 27 November 1996). The OSCE also questioned the holding of a third round, stating that ‘it is puzzling to see that the third round of the elections took place especially in those constituencies where the political opposition had won strong positions’ (Statement of the Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE on the situation in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, 29 November 1996).

was issued by the EU on 2 December, expressing concern at events in Serbia,⁸⁶ but it did not, in contrast to the demands from the US State Department, call on Milošević to reverse the decision to annul the elections.

While the EU was less forthright in its demands that the Milošević regime reverse the annulment of the elections, it did, with US encouragement, delay extending trade privileges to the SRJ while the situation with the elections remained unresolved.⁸⁷ The EU had agreed in principle to offer preferential import arrangements to the SRJ, as it had done to other former Yugoslav republics. However, at a meeting of the EU's Council of Foreign Affairs Ministers on 25 November, a statement was issued in which the EU said that it was postponing the decision on the matter until 6 December, pending an explanation of the decision to annul the election results and hold a third round of voting.⁸⁸ At the 6 December meeting the EU again refused to extend trade privileges to the SRJ.⁸⁹ In its statement the EU expressed a willingness to co-operate with the SRJ, 'as long as the country respects human rights, complies with the Dayton Peace Agreements and settles the controversy over the recent elections.'⁹⁰

In spite of these expressions of international support, in mid-December, the Zajedno leaders were angered by comments made by Italian foreign minister, Lamberto Dini following a visit to Belgrade. Dini arrived in Belgrade on 12 December and met with both Milošević and the opposition leaders, who informed him that they would stick

⁸⁶ 'Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on the local elections in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia', 2 December 1996.

⁸⁷ The US State Department had appealed to the EU not to grant trade privileges to the SRJ at this time. A spokesperson stated that the US 'has made it clear to our European partners that we oppose that. This is not the time for business as normal with Serbia. This is the time to stand up together and confront the Serbian Government about its frankly outrageous behaviour towards its own people' (US Department of State Daily Press Briefing, 3 December 1996).

⁸⁸ *European Report*, European Information Service, 27 November 1996.

⁸⁹ Associated Press Worldstream, 6 December 1996.

⁹⁰ *European Report*, European Information Service, 11 December 1996.

to their demands for recognition of the results of the 17 November elections. Speaking at a press conference after his meetings Dini emphasised the need to resolve the situation but described demands for a reversal of the election results as ‘unrealistic’ and the results of the elections as ‘something irreversible, something that cannot be changed as the opposition would like’.⁹¹ The Zajedno leaders expressed surprise at Dini’s statement, with Vuksanović stating that the DS would be sending a letter to the Italian government expressing its disagreement with what Dini had said,⁹² while Drašković claimed that Dini’s statement showed support for ‘legal terrorism committed against the electoral will of the Serbian people.’⁹³

Other international institutions with a direct interest in the former Yugoslavia that commented on the situation in Serbia included the OSCE and NATO. On November 29 the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Flavio Cotti, issued a statement which stated that he was ‘extremely concerned about the shortcomings, irregularities and violations of law which occurred during the vote verification process’ and offered OSCE assistance to resolve the matter.⁹⁴ In December, NATO also addressed the annulment of the elections, condemning the decision to annul the election results and calling on the Serbian government to ‘respect the democratic will of the people by reversing that decision,’ while commending the ‘opposition for its adherence to non-violence.’⁹⁵

⁹¹ Radio B92, 12 December 1996 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2795/A, 14 December 1996.

⁹² Tanjug, 13 December 1996 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2796/A, 16 December 1996.

⁹³ Agence France Presse, 13 December 1996. Drašković also claimed that Dini had emphasised that Milošević was needed to implement Dayton, and that Dini had said that ‘the patriotic duty of [Zajedno] is to recognise the reality in Serbia and to open dialogue with the Serbian president.’

⁹⁴ Statement of the Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE on the situation in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, 29 November 1996.

⁹⁵ ‘Statement on Bosnian and Herzegovina’, Press Communiqué M-NAC-2 (96)166. Issued at the Ministerial Meeting of the North Atlantic Council, 10 December 1996.

Throughout the protests two issues drew particularly strong international condemnations: regime attempts to stifle the independent media, and the use of force against demonstrators. The regime attempted to halt reports of the protests that were taking place by jamming the broadcasts of independent radio station B92,⁹⁶ and then, on 3 December ordering that the station be closed down on the grounds that it was operating without a legal permit. On the same day another independent radio station, the student-run Radio Indeks, claimed that its transmissions were being disrupted.⁹⁷ Condemnation of Milošević's actions against the independent media came from a wide variety of international actors, including the US State Department,⁹⁸ the White House,⁹⁹ and the EU,¹⁰⁰ and appears to have had some success in forcing him to reconsider. Two days later, on December 5, B92 was allowed to resume broadcasting; an outcome that the Zajedno leaders believed had a lot to do with international pressure. Commenting on the decision to allow B92 back on air, Djindjić stated that 'If it wasn't for us there would be no Western pressure. But without the United States [Milošević] would not have given us anything. He doesn't care what we do or think. He only cares about Clinton or Kohl'.¹⁰¹

While initially the response of the authorities to the demonstrations was simply to ignore them, as they continued the regime did resort to force to deal with the protestors

⁹⁶ The Associated Press, 29 November 1996.

⁹⁷ The Associated Press, 3 December 1996.

⁹⁸ US Department of State Daily Press Briefing, 3 December 1996.

⁹⁹ The Associated Press, 4 December 1996. In addition to condemning the regime's actions, the US also took concrete steps to undermine Milošević's ability to restrict the flow of information within Serbia by announcing that the Voice of America radio service would carry broadcasts from B92 while the station was off the air. See US Department of State Daily Press Briefing, 4 December 1996.

¹⁰⁰ Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on developments in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia', 4 December 1996; RAPID, Commission of the European Communities, 4 December 1996.

¹⁰¹ *The Washington Post*, 6 December 1996. It is worth noting that while the IC was vocal in its condemnation of the closure of B92, its editor, Veran Matić, pointed out that the independent media in Serbia had had no international assistance in 1996. Speaking in the US, Matić stated: 'The United States have no programs to help the free media in Serbia; in 1996, we received no support at all from the European Union either' (The Associated Press, 12 December 1996).

on a number of occasions, most notably on 24 December 1996. In mid-December, Milošević had begun to organise pro-government demonstrations to rival the Zajedno rallies which were intended to culminate in a meeting in Belgrade on 24 December. Thomas suggests that this move was intended to 'demonstrate to the international community that a 'silent majority' of Serbs remained loyal to Milošević' (Thomas, 1999: 302). However, some figures close to Milošević at the time claim that the purpose of the meeting to be held in Belgrade on 24 December was to give Milošević the opportunity to declare a state of emergency, call in the army and ban the demonstrations.¹⁰² When Milošević's supporters arrived, fighting broke out between them and the opposition supporters and at one point an opposition supporter was shot in the head.¹⁰³

Reacting to these events, Strobe Talbott noted that the US held 'the Serbian government and its president, Slobodan Milošević, responsible for the violent actions of the demonstrators,' and warned that 'violence against the protestors will have serious consequences and will inevitably lead to Serbia's further isolation from the international community.'¹⁰⁴ The EU also condemned Milošević for the violence that occurred on 24 December, asserting that 'Any action by the Serbian authorities to repress the rights of

¹⁰² Both SRJ president Zoran Lilić and Nebojša Čović claim that this was the case. According to Lilić: 'Some people wanted a riot that day. They could declare a state of emergency and use it to put an end to the crisis' ('The Fall of Milošević', episode 1 BBC documentary series broadcast on 5 January 2003).

¹⁰³ According to the then Mayor of Belgrade, Nebojša Čović, there were no police on the streets at this time to try and prevent the violence. Čović claims that he called Public Security Minister Radovan Stojičić to ask where the police were, and Stojičić informed him that Milošević had forbidden him to deploy any police. Only when Čović threatened to join the demonstrators if the police were not called in within 20 minutes, did Milošević order them to stop the fighting. Čović makes these claims in 'The Fall of Milošević', episode 1 BBC documentary series broadcast on 5 January 2003.

¹⁰⁴ Federal News Service, State Department Briefing, Statement by Acting Secretary of State Strobe Talbott, 24 December 1996.

the Serbian people can only lead to the further diplomatic, political and economic isolation of Serbia.'¹⁰⁵

Following the violence that occurred on 24 December, Milošević's regime began to take a harder line against the demonstrators and on 25 December Belgrade police issued a statement saying that demonstrations that block the flow of traffic would no longer be tolerated, and that the police would take action to prevent any further disturbance of public order.¹⁰⁶ This prompted German foreign minister, Klaus Kinkel to state that 'If President Milošević thinks, as would seem to be the case, that he can ban demonstrations by arguing they cause traffic problems, he would be well advised to think again in the light of the return to Europe which Belgrade itself desires.'¹⁰⁷ Although the demonstrators continued to assemble in Belgrade's Republic Square, the police prevented them from walking through the city, as they had been doing since the protests began.

In summary, while the IC was initially slow to react to the attempts by the Milošević regime to annul the local election results, all international actors that were involved in dealing with Serbia at this time condemned the regime's actions, with the US and the EU making moves to increase the isolation of the regime in response to these actions. The events that led to the harshest international criticism of the regime were the attempts to stifle the independent media that were reporting the protests and the use of violence against the protestors. In contrast to the international condemnation of the regime, the opposition was praised for its efforts to ensure that the demonstrations remained peaceful. The decision of the regime to allow B92 to continue to operate following international protests indicates that international pressure could be effective.

¹⁰⁵ The Press Association, 27 December 1996.

¹⁰⁶ IPS-Inter Press Service, 26 December 1996.

¹⁰⁷ Agence France Presse, 26 December 1996.

The OSCE Mission

In the second week of December Warren Christopher wrote to Milošević reiterating the US position that he ought to respect the results of 17 November elections. Milošević's response was to issue an open letter to Christopher, denying accusations that there had been any electoral fraud, and inviting an OSCE delegation to Belgrade to be informed of the facts.¹⁰⁸ This was followed by a letter to the OSCE from Milan Milutinović, inviting a delegation to Belgrade 'because of the dissatisfaction with the election results and objections formulated by the opposition party.'¹⁰⁹

On 20 December, the OSCE mission, headed by former Spanish prime minister Felipe Gonzalez, left for Belgrade, with a mandate to 'seek information from all political forces, institutions, and from the judiciary about facts and events relating to the municipal elections in the [SRJ], including the annulment of their results' and to make 'any recommendations that he deems appropriate.' In addition, Gonzalez was also to 'discuss the situation of democratic rights, media and national minorities' and to 'explore ways and means in which the OSCE can provide assistance in ensuring that his recommendations are implemented.'¹¹⁰

International pressure on Milošević increased considerably when Gonzalez released his report on 27 December, upholding the opposition's claims that they had won in the local elections in fourteen of Serbia's major towns and cities, including Belgrade.

¹⁰⁸ Tanjug, 13 December 1996 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2795/A, 14 December 1996. Thomas suggests that Milošević was encouraged to make this move because he interpreted Dini's remarks, made the previous day, as 'marking the limits of Western willingness to support Zajedno and the street protestors' (Thomas, 1999: 301).

¹⁰⁹ Agence France Presse, 14 December 1996.

¹¹⁰ OSCE Press Release, Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office leaves for Belgrade today, 20 December 1996.

Declaring that the election results had been annulled on the basis of arguments 'that no democratic country could have accepted,' Gonzalez recommended that the OSCE issue an urgent call on the Serbian government 'to implement the will of the citizens as expressed in the polls.'¹¹¹ Gonzalez also noted that there were 'deficiencies (of a structural nature) in the electoral system' and 'obstacles confronting the independent information media and serious difficulties standing in the way to free and fair access to the public media.'¹¹² The OSCE subsequently endorsed Gonzalez' report, and called for its 'swift and full' implementation.¹¹³

While the Serbian authorities initially appeared to welcome the report, which it described as 'constructive' and 'balanced,'¹¹⁴ it soon became clear that they did not intend to implement Gonzalez' recommendations and recognise the Zajedno victories. In its official response to the OSCE the regime did concede that the Zajedno coalition had won in three of the contested towns and in a number of contested municipalities in Belgrade, but denied that they had won in the other contested towns, and did not mention the elections for the Belgrade city assembly.¹¹⁵

Given that an international organisation now supported the claims of the Zajedno leaders that their votes had been stolen, and given the fact that the Serbian authorities had been held responsible for the violence that occurred on 24 December, the Milošević regime now came under increased international pressure. The US State Department was critical of the Serbian response to the OSCE, asserting that it 'does not go nearly far

¹¹¹ *The Guardian* (London), 28 December 1996.

¹¹² Preliminary Report of the OSCE Election Observation Mission, Presidential and Parliamentary Election, Republic of Serbia, September 21, 1997.

¹¹³ Agence France Presse, 3 January 1997.

¹¹⁴ Tanjug, 27 December 1996 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2804/A, 30 December 1996.

¹¹⁵ Tanjug, 3 January 1997 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2808/A, 6 January 1997.

enough in acknowledging the obligations of the Serbian Government to make sure that it respects the voice of the people.'¹¹⁶ In addition to the US, many other foreign ministries called for Milošević to accept the Gonzalez report in full, including the UK,¹¹⁷ France,¹¹⁸ Germany and the Netherlands.¹¹⁹ Furthermore, the EU released a statement on 9 January which called on the Serbian authorities to recognise the results of the 17 November elections. The statement pointed out that 'only reform directed towards full democratisation and the liberalisation of the political and economic system, in dialogue with the opposition, as well as respect for human rights and for the rights of minorities will bring a solution to the present problems and allow the full integration of the [SRJ] into the international community.'¹²⁰

With Milošević showing no sign of backing down, on 11 January Kornblum announced a series of measures, the intention of which, according to the State Department, was to 'tighten the pressure on Mr. Milošević and to demonstrate to him that there is a penalty to the type of behaviour that he has shown.'¹²¹ The US plan included the minimising of political and economic relations with Belgrade, and ensuring that international attention continued to be focused on events in Serbia. In addition, the State Department also said that the US 'was seriously considering increasing, in the short term, our assistance to those groups in Serbia that stand for democracy,' and that the US

¹¹⁶ US Department of State, Daily Press Briefing, 3 January 1997.

¹¹⁷ Agence France Presse, 3 January 1997.

¹¹⁸ Agence France Presse, 4 January 1997.

¹¹⁹ Agence France Presse, 8 January 1997.

¹²⁰ 'Declaration by the Presidency on Behalf of the European Union on the Situation in the FRY,' PESC/97/1, 9 January 1997.

¹²¹ US Department of State, Daily Press Briefing, 13 January 1997.

‘would like to help non-profit organisations, non-governmental organisations to try to identify the obstacles to democratisation’ in Serbia.¹²²

Faced with this mounting internal and international pressure, Milošević finally accepted defeat and, on 4 February, asked Marjanović that the Serbian parliament pass a special law allowing for the recognition of the Zajedno victories in the local elections.¹²³ Outlining his reasons for taking this step, Milošević claimed that the disputes over the elections had ‘caused great damage to our country both domestically and internationally’ and that ‘the state interest of improving relations of our country with the international community by far exceeds the significance of any number of seats in a handful of cities.’¹²⁴

The opposition leaders reacted cautiously to this move,¹²⁵ and initially it was unclear whether the Zajedno leaders would call off their protests even if the elections results were finally recognised. All pointed to the fact that there were a considerable number of other conditions to satisfy before Serbia could be fully democratised. Djindjić articulated this in an interview on 4 February, stating that: ‘This is the first step, but it is not enough. It should be followed by establishing the responsibility of those who violated and overstepped their powers. I would also like to remind the citizens that the state media must open up. Only then can we start to talk and only then will our peaceful protest

¹²² US Department of State, Daily Press Briefing, 13 January 1997. Following the events of 1996/1997 the National Democratic Institute and the International Republican Institute began to provide a relatively small amount of democratisation assistance to Serbia (See Gagnon, 1998). That US democratisation assistance was at a low level was acknowledged by the State Department in December 1998 when a spokesperson stated that ‘we do not go around promoting democratic change in Serbia as we do in other places’ (US Department of State Daily Briefing, 1 December 1998).

¹²³ This move came two days after the most violent night the protests had seen, during which police attacked demonstrators, many of whom, including Pešić, were badly beaten by the police, and which led to further international criticism of the regime.

¹²⁴ The Associated Press, 4 February 1997.

¹²⁵ Beta news agency, 5 February 1997 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2837/A, 7 February 1997.

stop.’¹²⁶ However, this changed on 6 February when, following a meeting with France’s foreign minister in Paris, Drašković announced that the protests would be halted once the decision to restore its victories in the 17 November was implemented.¹²⁷ On 11 February the Serbian parliament passed the law, known as the *Lex Specialis*, allowing for the recognition of the Zajedno election victories. Following this, on 15 February the Zajedno leadership announced that the protests would be suspended.

The IC and Serbia after the protests

Milošević’s annulment of the local election results, and the ensuing protests, did much to increase the international profile of the democratic opposition parties in Serbia, and also to undermine the credibility of the Milošević regime. The Zajedno parties clearly believed that they had destroyed Milošević’s international legitimacy and that they had succeeded in demonstrating that he could not be considered to be a factor for stability in the region. This view was clearly articulated by Djindjić who stated that ‘With our marches, we have broken the illusion in the West that Milošević is a statesman.’¹²⁸ Similarly, while in London in February 1997, Djindjić asserted that ‘The opposition is now being treated as the voice of a European Serbia. Milošević is history. ... It is a fact that all international players are talking to us and have no need to talk to Milošević, irrespective of the fact that he is in power. No one is looking to him for reforms in the

¹²⁶ Radio B92, 4 February 1997 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2836/A, 6 February 1997.

¹²⁷ Agence France Presse, 7 February 1997.

¹²⁸ *The Washington Post*, 2 December 1996.

country.'¹²⁹ Pešić also seemed to believe that events had damaged Milošević's international reputation: 'Our dictator had a stable position in the world, but on 18th November he stole the elections and the world said that he was no longer a factor for stability, but rather a factor for instability and concluded that it was better if he went.'¹³⁰ While Drašković believed that: 'Until now, [Milošević] has been able to deceive the West that he was a factor of peace and stability. However, the United States and the EU are now seeing that the man who kindled the war in Yugoslavia is prepared to begin a civil war in Serbia.'¹³¹

However, following the recognition of the election results, Serbia's relations with the IC essentially reverted to the situation that had existed before the protests began. Thus, senior US diplomats again held meetings with Milošević, while at the end of April, the EU finally decided to grant the autonomous trade preferences to the SRJ that had been postponed in December 1996. In its statement announcing its decision, the EU acknowledged that the Gonzalez report's recommendations had not been fully implemented and that the measure had been taken 'against the background of the need to promote economic revival and to reinforce a trend towards democratisation,' as well as pointing out that the measure was supported by Zajedno.¹³² In addition, Milošević was provided with some much needed cash by the Italian-Greek purchase of forty-nine

¹²⁹ Beta news agency, 27 February 1997 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2856/A, 1 March 1997.

¹³⁰ Beta news agency, 1 February 1997 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2833/A, 3 February 1997.

¹³¹ Kapital, Sofia, 2-8 December 1996, p.23 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2785/A, 3 December 1996.

¹³² 'Declaration of the European Union on the occasion of the granting of autonomous trade preferences to the FRY,' 30 April 1997. Commenting on the extension of trade privileges to the SRJ, and the subsequent decision of the EU to approve a \$112 million aid package to the SRJ in May, Human Rights Watch point out that 'In this way, the EU had rewarded President Milošević for doing what he was legally obligated to do in the first place – recognise the elections – without regard for other human rights violations that persist today' ('Serbian Elections Not Free and Fair', Human Rights Watch, 18 September 1997).

percent of Serbia's Telekom company for DM1.5 billion, 'a sum that was essential to Milošević in order to avoid social upheavals' (Stojanović, 2003: 205).

However, some things did change in the aftermath of the Zajedno protests, and what is most significant in the context of this research was the increased international profile of the democratic opposition parties and also the fact that while Milošević was still subjected to international pressure in relation to the situation in Kosovo and the implementation of the Dayton agreement, the need for democratic change within Serbia, and in particular the implementation of Gonzalez' recommendations, figured more prominently in international criticism of the Belgrade authorities. An EU statement pointed out that the OSCE mission had also called for dialogue between the government and the opposition on further measures that needed to be taken in order to ensure Serbia's democratisation, including the liberalisation of the media and changes to the electoral system.¹³³ Furthermore, the EU also declared that it while continuing to pressurise Milošević with respect to Gonzalez report, it would 'simultaneously keep up contacts with the opposition, and consider other measures to further the process of democratization.'¹³⁴ Similarly, a State Department spokesperson noted that, although the US welcomed the recognition of Zajedno's victories, 'we are distressed by the lack of implementation of the remaining recommendations made by the OSCE Mission of former Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez, including media reforms, media freedoms, and electoral reforms.'¹³⁵

¹³³ The Associated Press, 5 February 1997. The opposition parties seemed to have been assured by the IC that it would maintain pressure on Milošević to implement all of the provisions of Gonzalez report, with Djindjić stating at a Zajedno rally that 'We have received assurances that the international community will see that the Gonzalez report is fully applied, and exert pressure if necessary' (Agence France Presse, 6 February 1997).

¹³⁴ 1984th Council meeting, General Affairs, Brussels, 20 January 1997.

¹³⁵ US Department of State Daily Press Briefing, 4 April 1997.

Following the end of the protests, the democratic opposition parties continued to meet with IC officials and the representatives of national governments, thus retaining some of the international profile that had been achieved during the protests.¹³⁶ Djindjić acknowledged this point in October 1997 when he stated that:

All senior officials used to hold talks only with state representatives, as if the opposition did not exist. There is more equality now. I believe that there has been a great step forward as far as our position and status are concerned. The world is aware that there is a democratic opposition in Serbia.¹³⁷

In the course of these meetings the Zajedno leaders continued to receive verbal support for their efforts to ensure the democratisation of Serbia. US support was clear when the Zajedno leaders travelled to Washington in April 1997 and met with Albright. According to a State Department spokesperson, the meeting between the Zajedno leaders and Albright was intended 'to underscore the very strong support that the United States gives to democratic change in Serbia,' and also expressed support for the 'efforts of the Zajedno coalition and the other democratic forces in Serbia to lead Serbia out of the dead end it currently finds itself in and to begin the process of developing a modern European country.'¹³⁸ However, the democratic opposition parties still appeared to believe that the

¹³⁶ The Zajedno leaders visited Paris, London and Madrid in February 1997, and Germany and Denmark in March 1997, where they met OSCE representatives. In April 1997 they met Albright in Washington and Holbrooke and Gelbard in Belgrade, and in May they met Albright again when she visited Belgrade.

¹³⁷ Radio B92, 6 October 1997 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3044/A, 8 October 1997.

¹³⁸ Similar support was also evident when Zajedno representatives met OSCE chairman Niels Helveg Petersen in Copenhagen in March. Drašković had urged both Petersen and Germany's Kinkel to press Milošević to accept round table talks with the opposition to determine the election conditions for the elections due later in 1997 (Beta news agency, 19 March 1997 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2873/A, 21 March 1997). Following talks with Drašković and Pešić, Helveg Petersen urged the Serbian authorities to begin a dialogue with the opposition and to allow them full access to the media (Associated Press Worldstream, 17 March 1997).

IC could do more to help them, with Pešić stating that so far the Serbian opposition had 'received only moral support and a lot of admiration' from the west.¹³⁹

While the Zajedno leaders' meetings with IC representatives did give them an opportunity to press for international support to compel Milošević to accept democratic reforms, this was undermined domestically by Milošević's renewed contacts with the IC. Commenting on Albright's two day visit to Belgrade beginning on 31 May, in which she met with representatives of the opposition and with Milošević, Smajlović, notes that while the opposition 'had nothing to thank Mrs. Albright for last Saturday in Belgrade', she 'had made it possible for [Milošević] to emerge from the total diplomatic isolation in which he had found himself as of last November, at the same time publicly maintaining the pose of a champion of national interests who protects the constitution and dignity of a country against outside attacks.'¹⁴⁰

Furthermore, some commentators also note that the Zajedno protests had an additional impact in that they marked a turning point in the way in which Milošević ruled Serbia. Cohen argues that after the Zajedno protests Milošević began 'tightening the authoritarian facets of his control system, and abandoning practices that had been typical of his earlier "soft dictatorship"' (Cohen, 2001: 324), while an ICG report states that the 1996-1997 demonstrations 'provoked profound changes in the character of the regime,' noting in particular that the passing of the University and Public Information laws in 1998 'marked the end of democratic despotism and the beginning of despotism without democracy' (ICG, 2000: 3).

¹³⁹ Associated Press Worldstream, 4 April 1997.

¹⁴⁰ 'Strict but Just', Ljiljana Smajlović, *Vreme News Digest* Agency No. 296, 7 June 1997.

In summary, while initially weak, the IC's response to the Milošević regime's actions strengthened following the OSCE report which supported the opposition's claims that they had won key victories in local elections in 1996. Although the regime initially appeared unwilling to heed the recommendations of the Gonzalez report, mounting international pressure eventually led Milošević to reconsider. While the democratic opposition parties appeared to want to continue the protests in order to secure further reform in line with Gonzalez' recommendations, there was no international support for such action. The Gonzalez report provided the democratic opposition parties with an internationally sanctioned critique of Serbia's undemocratic electoral system, and as such provided a useful reference point in terms of their appeals for international assistance in their campaigns to bring about democratic reform within Serbia. In addition, democratic reform became a far more prominent feature on the international agenda following the events of 1996-1997. This, in combination with the raised international profile of the democratic opposition parties, can be considered as significant achievements on the part of the democratic opposition. However, once the crisis over the local election results was resolved, the IC essentially reverted to the same pattern of interaction with the Milošević regime that had prevailed before 1996 elections took place.

The 1997 republican and presidential elections

Almost as soon as the Milošević regime agreed to accept the opposition's victories in the 1996 local elections, the divisions that had existed within Zajedno from its inception became more prominent. A major disagreement over who should be the

coalition's presidential candidate in the forthcoming elections (Anastasijević, 2000: 50-51), the personal animosity that existed between Djindjić and Drašković, and also some significant differences between the SPO and the DS in relation to their political orientation (Goati, 2001a: 123) proved insurmountable, and by mid 1997 the coalition had effectively ceased to exist. The break up of the Zajedno coalition, in addition to weakening the opposition in the forthcoming elections, also, to some extent, undermined some of the gains that the opposition parties had achieved internationally. In its meetings with Zajedno representatives, US officials made it clear that they wanted the coalition to continue. Miodrag Perišić, a senior DS member, acknowledged this following a meeting with Kornblum in April, stating that Kornblum had said that 'a coordinated activity on the part of the [Zajedno] coalition was expected.'¹⁴¹

In protest at the unfair electoral conditions under which the 1997 Serbian parliamentary and presidential elections were to be held, the parties that had been signatories to a June agreement on the minimum election conditions that would ensure their participation,¹⁴² including the DS, the DSS and the GSS, announced that they would not participate, but would instead organise an 'anti-election campaign.'¹⁴³ The SPO,

¹⁴¹ Radio B92, 11 April 1997 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2892/A, 14 April 1997.

¹⁴² The 4 June agreement was signed by twelve opposition parties, which did not include the SPO, and set out the opposition's minimum conditions for the holding of fair elections. According to the agreement, if these conditions were not met, the parties to the agreement would not participate in the elections. The conditions as outlined by the agreement were as follows: 'that the number of constituencies should not be increased, that the constitution and law on nominating and electing [the] Serbian president be strictly observed and that full control of all stages of the election process be assured. The other two conditions are objectivity of the media, primarily television, during the election campaign, and the adoption of proper regulations on the financing of the political parties and the election campaign' (Tanjug, 29 May 1997 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2933/A, 31 May 1997). The SPO did not sign the agreement because they claimed it violated an early Zajedno agreement (Beta news agency, 4 June 1997 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2938/A, 6 June 1997).

¹⁴³ Radio B92, 19 July 1997 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2976/A, 21 July 1997. The move came as a direct response to a new electoral law that was passed on 18 July, and which increased the number of electoral units in Serbia from nine to twenty-nine, making the electoral conditions for the opposition parties worse than they had been in 1993 (Goati, 2001a: 125).

however, had not signed the June agreement, and, following negotiations with Milošević, it was announced that the SPO would participate in the elections that had been scheduled for 21 September, though the party reserved the right to reverse this decision if the authorities did not invite the OSCE to monitor the elections.¹⁴⁴ Commenting on the decision, Drašković stated that although the election conditions were 'not brilliant', they were better than they had been in previous elections.¹⁴⁵

The DS, DSS and GSS all decided to boycott the elections, as they considered that the conditions under which they were being held were not in keeping with the recommendations made in the Gonzalez report. According to Koštunica, the opposition was hoping for one of two outcomes: either the elections would be called off, following which fair electoral conditions could be negotiated, and the elections rescheduled, or the boycott would highlight the lack of legitimacy of the elections, which would compel the regime to call new elections, as had happened with respect to the federal elections of May 1992.¹⁴⁶ Djindjić clearly believed that opposition participation in the elections was essential if they were to be considered legitimate, and declared that the opposition was 'so strong now that if we were to tell the world that we were boycotting the next elections, then these elections would not be considered legitimate.'¹⁴⁷

However, if the democratic opposition parties that were boycotting the elections were hoping for international support for their 'anti-election' campaign, they were to be disappointed. The first indication of this came in August, from Richard Holbrooke, who,

¹⁴⁴ Radio B92, 10 August 1997 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2995/A, 12 August 1997.

¹⁴⁵ Radio B92, 10 August 1997 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2995/A, 12 August 1997.

¹⁴⁶ Radio B92, 3 August 1997 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2989/A, 5 August 1997.

¹⁴⁷ Radio B92, 9 December 1996 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2792/A, 11 December 1996.

in an interview given to B92, stated that an election boycott 'would be stupid.'¹⁴⁸ Both the DSS¹⁴⁹ and the DS were critical of Holbrooke's remarks, with Djindjić claiming that Holbrooke was not competent to judge on the issue and that his remarks should be disregarded.¹⁵⁰ A lack of support for the opposition's position was also evident in the comments of a State Department spokesperson who, while acknowledging that the decision regarding whether or not to participate in the elections 'under grossly unfair conditions' was a difficult one, stated that: 'In general ... the United States favours the broadest participation in the political process. Boycotts are not particularly effective tools for bringing about political change. ... So we are not advocating a boycott.'¹⁵¹ Similarly, in a statement issued at the end of July 1997, the EU, while noting that 'Recent legislation in Serbia is leading the country away from true democratization,' implied that the EU was also not in favour of a boycott. While not explicitly denouncing a boycott, the EU statement asserts that 'the European Union exhorts all opposition political groupings to engage themselves fully during the period of the electoral campaign and to assume their political responsibilities.'¹⁵²

As the elections approached there was little international comment, a point that was noted by a journalist during a State Department Press Briefing in September. The State Department's spokesperson responded by noting that:

¹⁴⁸ 'Squeaking Bulldozer', Dejan Anastasijević, *Vreme News Digest Agency* No. 306, 16 August 1997. Anastasijević also mentions another gaffe by Holbrooke during his visit, in which in response to a question on what type of a negotiator Milošević was, he stated that Milošević 'very skilfully protects the interests of his country'. The following day in response to the same question he reformulated his answer and stated that 'Milošević skilfully protects his own interests'.

¹⁴⁹ Beta news agency, 9 August 1997 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2994/A, 11 August 1997

¹⁵⁰ Djindjić also noted that in a meeting with the opposition Holbrooke was mainly concerned with the situation in Bosnia and relations between Serbia and Montenegro, and was not particularly interested in the forthcoming elections in Serbia (Beta news agency, 9 August 1997 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D2995/A, 12 August 1997).

¹⁵¹ US Department of State Daily Press Briefing, 12 August 1997.

¹⁵² 'Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on the FRY,' 31 July 1997.

obviously our focus until yesterday – and I would say it’s a continuing one – has to do with events in Bosnia, particularly the municipal elections, which were so critical to the future of Bosnia. So we focused on that. Secondly, we obviously have had real concerns about the prospects for truly democratic elections in the [SRJ]. So we don’t have high hopes for those elections, clearly. I think the low-key approach that you refer to reflects, to a large degree, the low-key expectations we have in regard to those elections.¹⁵³

As such, in spite of the raised international profile of the democratic opposition parties following the 1996/1997 protests, and the international attention that the undemocratic nature of the Milošević regime had received, once the Zajedno electoral victories had been recognised, the IC’s focus again reverted to Bosnia, with little, if any, international support offered to the democratic opposition parties either in their efforts to ensure fair electoral conditions for the 1997 polls, or their attempts to undermine the legitimacy of those elections when this was not forthcoming.

The parliamentary elections and the first round of the presidential elections were held on 21 September 1997. The turnout of 57.4% was disappointing to those who had boycotted the election as it represented a drop of just over 4% from the 61.6% turnout in the 1993 republican election and an even smaller drop from the 60.3% turnout in the 1996 federal elections. In the parliamentary elections the SPS-JUL-ND coalition gained 34.2% of the votes, a slight drop on the SPS’s result in the 1993 elections, and lost its parliamentary majority, winning only 110 of the 250 seats available. Furthermore, in the presidential election, the SPS candidate Zoran Lilić, although topping the poll, did not get more than 50% of the votes cast, and so a second round was held on 5 October. In the second round Lilić was narrowly defeated by Šešelj, though the election was

¹⁵³ US Department of State Daily Press Briefing, 16 September 1997

subsequently declared invalid as the turnout was less than the required 50%.¹⁵⁴ In addition to Šešelj's success in the presidential elections, the SRS also performed unexpectedly well in the parliamentary elections, coming in second to the SPS-JUL-ND coalition with 28.1% of the vote and 82 seats in the parliament, more than doubling the percentage of the vote and seats it had received in the 1993 election.

Party	PERCENTAGE OF VOTE	Seats
<i>SPS-JUL-ND</i>	34.2%	110 (44%)
<i>SRS</i>	28.1%	82 (32.8%)
<i>SPO</i>	19.1%	45 (18%)

Table 4: Results of the 1997 elections for the Serbian parliament (Figures from Goati, 2001a: 213)

The SPO finished the election in third place, winning 19.1% of the vote and 45 parliamentary seats. While this represented a slight increase from the 16.6% that DEPOS had won in 1993, Goati argues that it nevertheless represented ‘stagnation’ rather than success, as the SPO did not gain votes from the absence of the other democratic opposition parties (Goati, 2001a: 131). The SPO result was well below what Drašković had predicted and his disappointment was compounded by his performance in the presidential elections. In spite of his confident predictions that he would win the presidency, with only 20.6% of the vote, Drašković came in third place, and so did not even secure a place in the second round (Goati, 2001a: 132). Drašković also contested the second presidential election, held in December after the September presidential election

¹⁵⁴ A rescheduled presidential election was held in December and Šešelj was beaten by the SPS-JUL-ND candidate Milan Milutinović.

was declared invalid, but in December his performance was even worse, winning only 15.4% of the vote in the first round, and again failing to secure a place in the second round (Anastasijević, 2000: 55).

The poor performance of the SPO heralded another round of acrimony between the parties of the opposition. Drašković blamed his and the SPO's poor performance in the presidential and parliamentary elections on those parties that had advocated a boycott of the elections. On 30 September Drašković took his revenge when the SPO, acting with the support of the SPS and the SRS, voted to have Djindjić removed as Belgrade's mayor (Anastasijević, 2000: 55). In addition to ousting Djindjić, Drašković also sacked key figures within Studio B, which the opposition had gained control of when they took power in Belgrade's city council, claiming that the station had been biased in favour of the parties that were boycotting the elections during the election campaign period¹⁵⁵ (Anastasijević, 2000: 56). Subsequent demonstrations to protest against these actions were suppressed by riot police, and although Drašković tried to distance himself from this, it nevertheless damaged his credibility.

Following the parliamentary elections there was no party or electoral coalition that had a sufficient number of seats to form a government. Drašković considered himself to be in a relatively strong position to negotiate with the regime on forming a coalition government, apparently believing that there was no chance of the SPS inviting the Radicals into government. As such, in negotiations with the SPS, Drašković demanded

¹⁵⁵ Anastasijević points out that following these events Studio B became biased in favour of the SPO (Anastasijević, 2000: 57).

quite a high price for his co-operation.¹⁵⁶ Negotiations between the SPO and SPS continued throughout the first few months of 1997, but on 24 March 1998 a government was formed comprising the SPS, JUL and the SRS (often referred to as the 'red-black coalition'), leaving Drašković and the SPO out of government and considerably compromised by its willingness to negotiate with the authorities.

In spite of the raised international profile of Serbia's democratic opposition and also the increased prominence of Serbia's internal political order on the international agenda, the IC paid little attention to the 1997 elections. While it was noted that the conditions were unfair, there will no sustained international pressure on Milošević to reform the electoral system and fully implement the provisions of the Gonzalez report.

Conclusions

Differences between the democratic opposition parties and the Milošević regime

The issues that were of primary importance for the IC in its dealings with Serbia during the time period covered by this case study were the implementation of the Dayton agreement, the situation in Kosovo, and the need for democratic reform in Serbia - in particular the need for the Milošević regime to recognise the victories of the Zajedno coalition in the 1996 local elections. Prior to the regime's annulment of these election victories, Serbia's internal political order had not been the central concern of the IC in its dealings with Serbia, though there was a general recognition on the part of the IC that this

¹⁵⁶ In January 1998 he reportedly demanded 'that the SPO should be given the positions of Prime Minister and President of the Government, ten ministerial places, and a proportion of the ambassadorial positions' (Thomas, 1999: 393).

was an issue that would need to be addressed at some point. IC actors did condemn some flagrant violations of democratic norms, especially in relation to attempts on the part of the regime to repress the independent media. However, following the Zajedno protests of 1996-1997, the undemocratic nature of the Milošević regime was a more prominent item on the international agenda, being noted alongside implementing the Dayton peace agreement and granting some degree of autonomy to Kosovo as a key issue in terms of Serbia's relations with the IC. In relation to this issue of democratic reform in Serbia, the differences between the Milošević regime and the democratic opposition parties are self-evident.

The most significant issue for the IC during this time period was again centred on Bosnia, with IC representatives consistently stressing the need for Serbia to comply with all obligations outlined in the Dayton agreement, including full co-operation with the ICTY. As has been shown above, the democratic opposition parties that made up the Zajedno coalition went to great lengths to convince the IC that they would honour this agreement should they take power. In addition, they also sought to counter any belief within the IC that Milošević, as a signatory of the Dayton agreement, represented a factor for regional stability, arguing that conflict was more likely to recur if Serbia remained undemocratic. Given that the Milošević regime was subject to international criticism and pressure in relation to the failure to fully honour obligations under the Dayton agreement, the democratic opposition parties held positions on the issues that were of central importance to the IC that were different to those of the Milošević regime. As these positions were in line with those of the IC, the democratic opposition parties within Zajedno can be seen as presenting a credible alternative partner to the IC.

The relationship between the IC and the Serbian democratic opposition parties

At the beginning of the time period covered by this case study, Serbia's democratic opposition parties received little international support, and the federal and local elections that were held in November 1996 did not receive any significant international attention until after Milošević's attempt to deprive the Zajedno coalition of its victories in the 1996 local elections. However, the mass protests that followed these events greatly increased the international profile of Serbia's democratic opposition parties and put the issue of Serbia's internal political order at the centre of the international agenda. As a result of their efforts to secure international support for their campaign to gain recognition for their victories in the local elections, the democratic opposition parties frequently met with high-ranking representatives of international organisations and national governments. Furthermore, the Zajedno coalition received explicit international support in their campaign to have their election victories restored. When Milošević refused to concede defeat and recognise the opposition's victories both the US and the EU took steps to increase Serbia's level of international isolation.

At the beginning of this time period, Serbia's democratic opposition parties believed that Milošević, as a signatory of the Dayton agreement, was, to some degree, supported by the IC and perceived internationally as a factor for regional stability. As has been seen, the opposition consistently challenged this notion, arguing that, on the contrary, regional stability would not be possible with Milošević in power and an undemocratic Serbia, with some opposition leaders warning that as a result of Milošević's continuance in power, serious conflict in Kosovo was more likely. Given this belief, the democratic

opposition parties were critical of what they saw as tacit international support for Milošević in the 1996 election campaign, and also criticised the weak international response at the beginning of the stand off over the annulment of the local election results. However, in spite of their disappointment, the democratic opposition parties assessed that international support was an important component in their battle against the Milošević regime. As such, although often critical of the IC, the opposition parties did not engage in any sort of virulent anti-Western rhetoric. On the contrary, the parties within the Zajedno coalition made efforts to convince the IC of its pro-Western orientation.

The impact of international policy in the democratic opposition parties

The democratic opposition parties launched three major campaigns against the Milošević regime between the beginning of 1996 and the end of 1997: the two election campaigns in 1996 and 1997 and the protests that aimed at forcing the Milošević regime to recognise Zajedno's victories in the 1996 local elections. In terms of the outcome of these campaigns the results are mixed. While the campaign to ensure that the regime recognised Zajedno's victories in the 1996 local elections was a major success for the democratic opposition, it was followed by Serbian legislative elections that were an abysmal failure, while the 1996 local and federal elections saw the opposition poll badly at the federal level but secure important victories at the local level.

Looking first at the opposition's failures, it is immediately clear that different factors account for failure in the 1996 federal elections and the 1997 republican elections. In 1997, the inability of the democratic opposition parties to agree on a strategy, with the SPO contesting the election while the other parties staged a boycott, handed Milošević an

easy victory. While in previous time periods, most notably in 1993 and 1994, differences with respect to international policy can be considered to have exacerbated the already existing divisions within the opposition; in 1997 the parties were divided over the issue of whether or not to contest the elections in the grossly unfair conditions that prevailed at this time. The SPO's willingness to contest elections that its former coalition partners had chosen to boycott, its months of negotiations with the regime aimed at the formation of a coalition government, and its co-operation with the regime in ousting the DS city government in Belgrade, did much to undermine the SPO's status as an opposition partner, and indicates, at least to a certain extent, the party's failure to resist integration into the regime, one of the tasks necessary to effectively oppose the regime (resisting integration; maintaining a zone of ideological autonomy; questioning the legitimacy of the regime and raising the costs of authoritarian rule; and presenting a credible alternative both domestically and internationally). That the SPO did not join the Serbian government was more Milošević's choice than Drašković's. Whether this was because Drašković was demanding too high a price for his participation, or a strategic move by Milošević to discredit the SPO in the eyes of the other opposition parties, the effect was the same: the credibility of the SPO as an opposition party was seriously undermined.

While clearly the democratic opposition parties themselves bear a large degree of responsibility for their failure in 1997, it must also be noted that, in spite of the success that the Zajedno parties had in highlighting the undemocratic nature of the Milošević regime, there was very little international pressure on Milošević to ensure that the 1997 elections could take place in free and fair conditions, as demanded by most of the opposition parties. While US and EU representatives disapproved of the opposition

parties' decision not to contest the election, they did little to address the issue that provided the rationale for that boycott. Although the IC regularly stated that the Milošević regime must implement the Gonzalez report's recommendations in full, no international actors exerted any real pressure on the Milošević regime to do so. As such, while the IC may not have actively exacerbated the conflict between the opposition parties at this time, its passivity in relation to the issue that was dividing the democratic opposition did nothing to help the parties overcome their differences.

While the disunity of the opposition and the inability of the SPO to resist integration into the regime may help to account for the opposition's failures in the 1997 elections, this cannot be said of the 1996 federal elections. In 1996, all four of the democratic opposition parties considered in this study contested the federal elections as part of the Zajedno coalition. However, Milošević's ability to portray the ending of the conflict in Bosnia, and the lifting of international sanctions as the results of his peacemaking policy, did much to boost his credibility and image as a statesman. As such, even if unintentionally, by providing Milošević with a certain degree of external legitimacy, international policy contributed to undermining the democratic opposition parties in the 1996 federal elections, diminishing their ability to present a credible alternative to the Milošević regime at the domestic level. It is also clear that the democratic opposition parties considered that the IC was continuing to offer tacit support to Milošević throughout the campaign, in particular by the participation of international officials in meetings with regime figures during the election campaign. The opposition's attempts to pressurise Milošević in relation to the conditions under which the elections

would be held, and the need for independent international observers to oversee the elections, received little international support.

When considering the success of the democratic opposition in its campaign to ensure that the Milošević regime recognised its victories in the 1996 local elections a number of factors are particularly significant. Firstly, in spite of the strains between the opposition parties, and in particular between the SPO and the DS, throughout the duration of the protests in 1996 and 1997 the Zajedno parties maintained a united front. Furthermore, they enjoyed considerable success in carrying out the tasks necessary to effectively oppose the regime (resisting integration; maintaining a zone of ideological autonomy; questioning the legitimacy of the regime and raising the costs of authoritarian rule; and presenting a credible alternative both domestically and internationally). Zajedno successfully brought the legitimacy of the regime into question by highlighting the regime's attempts to steal the elections, both domestically and internationally, and also raised the costs to the regime of its undemocratic behaviour. In addition, they ensured that the regime's undemocratic actions remained at the centre of political discourse in Serbia throughout the duration of the protests, and as such maintained a zone of ideological autonomy against the regime even if only briefly. Furthermore, the democratic opposition parties also ensured that the need for democratic reform became a more prominent feature on the international agenda. As such, while international support may have been a crucial factor in pushing Milošević to concede defeat on this issue, without the determination of the democratic opposition parties to both highlight the regime's abuses and to ensure that their victories were recognised, there would have been no international pressure for Milošević to concede.

In terms of its performance in carrying out the tasks necessary to effectively oppose the regime over this time period, as has been noted, while all four parties were successful in resisting integration into the regime throughout 1996, the SPO was seriously deficient in this regard in 1997 and early 1998. The opposition also did much to bring the legitimacy of the regime into question, both domestically and internationally, and raised the costs of authoritarian rule. Furthermore, the opposition had some impact on the political agenda in Serbia during the winter protests. The moderate stance of the Zajedno coalition in relation to national issues, and its publicly stated willingness to respect the Dayton agreement meant that, from an IC perspective, Zajedno did indeed represent a credible alternative to the Milošević regime. Furthermore, the Zajedno protests following the annulment of its election victories, and the success of its campaign to have those victories reinstated, did much to enhance the credibility of the democratic opposition domestically and demonstrated that the Milošević regime was not entirely invincible. However, the breakdown of the Zajedno coalition in 1997 and the inability of the parties to agree a common strategy for the Serbian elections did much to diminish the credibility that had been gained in late 1996 and early 1997. While the opposition parties themselves must take much of the blame for this, the lack of international support that they received in their efforts to ensure that the elections would take place under equitable conditions, did not help. As such, the impact of IC policies and actions was positive in relation to the winter protests, and constituted a direct intervention on the part of the IC in support of the opposition parties' campaign. However, in relation to the 1996 and 1997 elections, while there was no direct international involvement, the indirect effect of

international policy undermined the effectiveness of the democratic opposition parties in their campaigns against the Milošević regime.

Chapter 6: Kosovo

This case study begins in the spring of 1998 when the IC first responded to the increasing violence in Kosovo and continues until June 1999 at the end of the NATO bombing of the SRJ that occurred in response to this violence. While at the end of 1997 Serbia was enjoying a relatively high degree of international integration, this began to change in 1998 as the IC responded to events in Kosovo, beginning with relatively minor sanctions and culminating in the NATO bombing campaign that began on 24 March 1999 and the almost total diplomatic isolation of Milošević and his associates following the ICTY indictment of Milošević and other key regime figures for war crimes.

During this time period the most important issue for the IC in its dealings with Serbia was the situation in Kosovo and the increasing levels of violence in the province, and this was the stated reason for all the coercive measures imposed during this time period. Following the demonstrations of 1996/7, the parties involved in the Zajedno coalition had successfully cultivated good relations with the IC, and believed that the successes of its campaign included demonstrating that a credible alternative to the Milošević regime did exist within Serbia, and exposing internationally the true nature of Milošević's rule. As such, this case study will also allow for an examination of the impact on IC-opposition relations once the focus of international attention reverted to Milošević and Kosovo, while issues such as democratic reform and media liberalisation, which the Zajedno partners had fought hard to place on the international agenda, were once again sidelined. Furthermore, given the harsh international reaction to events in Kosovo this case study provides the opportunity to examine how such policies impacted

on the relationship between the IC and the democratic opposition parties and to assess whether this international approach to dealing with Serbia had a significant impact on the effectiveness of the democratic opposition parties.

Evaluating the impact of IC policies on the effectiveness of the democratic opposition parties in opposing the Milošević regime during this time period is made somewhat difficult by the absence of any major opposition challenges to the regime. As there were no elections scheduled at this time the opportunity for directly challenging the Milošević regime for power did not arise. In addition, although a new opposition alliance was formed, The Alliance for Change (SZP – Savez za Promene), and also planned to organise anti-regime demonstrations, the deteriorating situation in Serbia and the threat of military action, precluded the opposition parties from engaging in such activity at this time. However, in spite of the lack of major challenges to the regime, the democratic opposition parties did make efforts to oppose the regime. Firstly, while the SZP did not manage to carry out its planned anti-regime demonstrations, its efforts to forge a new coalition and plan a campaign, did, nevertheless, represent an attempt to challenge the regime. Secondly, during the time period considered here, the Milošević regime became increasingly repressive, passing two key pieces of legislation in 1998 that aimed to undermine any resistance to its rule: the Law on Universities in May 1998 and the Law on Public Information in October 1998. While the democratic opposition parties did not manage to mount the type of large-scale protests such as those in 1992 and 1996/1997, they were, nevertheless, strongly opposed to these measures, and challenged the regime on these issues. While clearly less significant than the campaigns undertaken in earlier time periods, these efforts did represent challenges to the Milošević regime.

Key Issues for the International Community

As was noted in chapter 5, the situation in Kosovo was one of the stated reasons for the maintenance of the outer wall of sanctions against the SRJ in the post-Dayton period. However, it was not until the level of violence in the province began to increase in late 1997 that Kosovo came to dominate the international agenda. Throughout the time period covered by this case study, the situation in Kosovo was the overriding priority for the IC in its dealings with Serbia. International policy focused on coercing Milošević to comply with international demands designed to resolve the conflict, first through the use of sanctions and later through the use of military force. The Contact Group took the lead in the international response to the Kosovo crisis and over time it was joined by the UN Security Council, the OSCE and NATO. In addition to this multilateral response, individual states also acted to defuse the crisis, with the US playing a major role.

The Contact Group set out the IC's demands early in the crisis and these were reiterated by all international actors dealing with the crisis. In a statement issued on 9 March 1998, the Contact Group made clear that any resolution to the Kosovo crisis should be based on Kosovo being granted a substantial degree of autonomy, while the territorial integrity of the SRJ must be preserved. As such, throughout this time period, there was no international support for Kosovo to become independent. In its 9 March statement, the Contact Group demanded that special police units stationed in Kosovo must be withdrawn and actions by the security forces affecting the civilian population must be halted. The Contact Group also insisted that humanitarian organisations and representatives of the Contact Group must be allowed access to Kosovo and expressed support for the proposal for a new OSCE mission headed by Felipe Gonzales, the

personal representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, and for the return of the long-term OSCE missions to Sandžak and Kosovo.¹ Finally, the Contact Group insisted that Milošević must publicly commit himself to a process of dialogue with the leadership of the Kosovo Albanian community with a view to finding a political solution to the conflict.² On 25 March a further demand was added when the Contact Group stipulated that there must be international participation in any negotiations between the two sides, as this was 'essential to the achievement of a political solution.'³

When the sanctions imposed on Serbia failed to yield results, the IC increased pressure by demonstrating its willingness to use military force in pursuit of its objectives and on 11 June NATO's military planners were instructed to prepare a range of military options should the use of force ever become necessary.⁴ On 12 October, NATO significantly increased international pressure when it issued an Activation Order for both limited air strikes and a phased air campaign to begin within four days. This period was intended to enable a deal that was being negotiated by Richard Holbrooke to be consolidated (Weller, 1999: 272).

¹ These missions, which had been approved by Milan Panić while he was SRJ Prime Minister, had come to an end when the Yugoslav authorities refused to reissue visas for their members in response to the OSCE decision to suspend Serbian membership of the organisation on the grounds of its abuse of human rights in Kosovo.

² Contact Group Statement on Kosovo, 9 March 1998.

³ Contact Group Statement on Kosovo, 25 March 1998. These demands were supported by the UN Security Council in Resolution 1160 passed on 31 March 1998 and NATO (Statement of Ministerial Meeting, North Atlantic Council, Luxembourg, 28 May 1998).

⁴ According to a NATO statement the military planners were ordered to: 'assess and develop for further Council consideration and decisions as appropriate a full range of options with the mission, based on the relevant legal basis, of halting or disrupting a systematic campaign of violent repression and expulsion in Kosovo; supporting international efforts to secure the agreement of the parties to a cessation of violence and disengagement; and helping to create the conditions for serious negotiations toward a political settlement' (Statement issued at the Meeting of North Atlantic Council in Defence Ministers Session, 11 June 1998).

The IC's coercive approach appeared to pay off in October 1998 when Holbrooke concluded agreements with Milošević including a set of eleven principles that were intended to lead to a political solution to the conflict and an agreement on the deployment of an international observer mission, the OSCE's Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM). However, it soon became clear that the Holbrooke agreements were not going to achieve a peaceful resolution to the conflict and, in spite of the presence of international observers, fighting in Kosovo continued and intensified. The KLA was chastised for carrying out provocative attacks against the Serbs, while for their part the Serbs were accused of engaging in disproportionate responses to the KLA actions. Against this background, the apparent massacre of 45 Kosovo Albanian civilians at Račak on 15 January proved to be a turning point in terms of the international response to events in Kosovo.

On 29 January 1999, the Contact Group issued a statement in which it ordered both sides to begin negotiations on a settlement at Rambouillet in France. When the Serbs refused to sign the agreement that was drawn up at Rambouillet, NATO began an air campaign against the SRJ on 24 March. NATO's air campaign continued until 10 June when it was officially suspended following Milošević's acceptance of the IC's terms for ending the bombing campaign and the conclusion of an agreement between NATO and Yugoslavia detailing the withdrawal of all Yugoslav security forces from Kosovo.⁵ This

⁵ The terms that were presented to Milošević had been worked out by Victor Chernomyrdin, Martti Ahtisaari and Strobe Talbott and were based on a set of principles for a settlement that had been agreed by the G8 meeting in Germany on 6 May. The most contentious issues were the composition of an international force that would be deployed to Kosovo to assist in implementing a political settlement for the province, and whether or not all Yugoslav forces would have to leave the province. Once it had been agreed that the international force would be under UN auspices, but with substantial NATO participation, and that all Yugoslav forces should leave Kosovo, Chernomyrdin and Ahtisaari presented the terms to Milošević. The Yugoslav parliament accepted the proposal and talks began between NATO and the Yugoslav military to reach a military-technical agreement detailing the withdrawal of the Yugoslav forces.

agreement was concluded on 9 June and the following day the bombing was halted and the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1244.

Before considering the differences between the Milošević regime and the democratic opposition parties with regard to the conflict in Kosovo, the regime's position needs to be noted. The Milošević regime considered Serbian actions in Kosovo to be a legitimate response to the threats posed by the terrorist actions of the KLA, which, from the standpoint of the Serbian authorities, was an armed group that was attempting to bring about the secession of Kosovo from Serbia. As such, the regime's perspective was that events in Kosovo were an internal Serbian affair in which the IC had no right to interfere. This position was succinctly outlined by SPS spokesperson Ivica Dačić who rejected the possibility of international mediation on the grounds that 'internal issues of Serbia cannot be internationalised.'⁶ The regime also denied that Kosovo's Albanian population was deprived of basic human rights, arguing that they enjoyed minority rights at an acceptable international standard.

As such, when considering the extent to which the democratic opposition parties differed from the Milošević regime in terms of its positions in relation to the Kosovo conflict, and the extent to which the democratic opposition parties represented a credible alternative partner to the IC at this time, the attitudes of the parties to the conflict in general, to the role that the IC should play in attempting to resolve the conflict, and to the key developments of the international reaction to conflict will be considered.

⁶ *RFE/RL Newline*, 13 March 1998. Not only did the administration reject suggestions that IC representatives should mediate in the dispute, but openly blamed elements of the IC for the violence in the province. Speaking at the beginning of March 1998 the Yugoslav Defence Minister Pavle Bulatović stated that 'there would be no terrorism [in Kosovo] and the Kosovo problem would not be what it is today if the separatists did not enjoy the support of a certain section of the international community' (*RFE/RL Newline* 4 March 1998.)

The democratic opposition parties' interpretations of the Kosovo conflict

All the parties considered in this study were in agreement with the stance of the Milošević regime that Kosovo's independence was unacceptable, but as this was also the position of the IC, it cannot be considered controversial. However, examining the opposition parties' beliefs regarding who bore responsibility for the conflict and their proposed solutions, reveals differences between the opposition parties themselves, and also between some of the opposition parties and the Milošević regime.

Drašković and the SPO opposed independence for Kosovo, arguing that the province should get wide autonomy within Serbia, in line with the highest European democratic standards, though these were left largely undefined.⁷ Drašković urged the Serbian parliament to invite representatives of Kosovo's political parties to negotiate and suggested that there should be a greater degree of local self-government throughout Serbia.⁸ Drašković was highly critical of the KLA, which he clearly identified as a terrorist organisation, and claimed that there was an element of bias or unequal treatment in the IC's reaction to events in Kosovo, arguing that Kosovo's political representatives and the KLA should have been subject to the same type of ultimatums and warnings as the Serbian authorities and security forces.⁹

⁷ 'Kosovo', Vuk Drašković, *NIN* 2466, 2 April 1998 (author's translation)

⁸ Radio B92, 3 March 1998 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3167/A, 5 March 1998

⁹ Radio B92, 9 March 1998 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3172/A, 11 March 1998. Speaking in June, Drašković also rejected the Contact Group's demands that Serbian and Yugoslav forces should withdraw from Kosovo, stating that this demand was unacceptable (Tanjug, 16 June 1998 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3256/A, 18 June 1998).

Drašković was also critical of Kosovo's political representatives,¹⁰ rejecting the suggestion that the Kosovo Albanian political leadership was merely engaged in a struggle for rights, and alleging that Rugova's programme was 'looking for an independent Kosovo and greater Albania' and as such was 'not a democratic but a terrorist programme.'¹¹ As such, Drašković's position in this regard was closer to that of the Milošević regime than the IC which, while initially somewhat critical of the KLA, was supportive of Rugova and the Kosovo Albanian political leadership.

A further issue on which Drašković's position was at odds with that of the IC was in relation to assigning responsibility for the conflict in Kosovo. While the IC clearly saw Milošević and the Serbian authorities as bearing most of the responsibility in this regard, Drašković was considerably more critical of the Kosovo Albanians, claiming that 'Milošević is guilty of 1,000 things, but he is not guilty for Kosovo, because under Tito's 1974 constitution even then [the Kosovo Albanians] were unhappy. They had the right to veto Serb law but they still wanted independence.'¹² In this early phase of the conflict, Drašković's criticism of the Serbian authorities was restricted to condemning the lack of internal political and economic reform in Serbia, and the weakness of Serbia internationally, which he believed was encouraging the KLA. According to an SPO statement issued in early March 1998, Albanian 'extremists' assessed that, as a result of the lack of political and economic reform in Serbia, the country would continue to grow weaker, and would be 'constantly labelled as the main culprit in the Balkans.'¹³ The

¹⁰In March 1998, Drašković alleged that Kosovo's citizens were 'being exposed to terrorism and the intolerance of almost all the Albanian parties' (Beta news agency, 5 March 1998 in *BBC Monitoring Europe – Political*, 6 March 1998).

¹¹'Milošević nije jedini problem' interview with Vuk Drašković, *NIN* 2505, 29 December 1998 (author's translation).

¹²*The Scotsman*, 5 May 1998.

¹³Beta news agency, 8 March 1998 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3171/A, 10 March 1998.

statement went on to argue that only with a democratic Serbia could the Kosovo crisis be resolved and terrorism and 'Albanian separatism' ended.¹⁴ However, this implicit criticism of the regime was not matched by condemnation of the actions of Serbia's security forces in Kosovo, which were explicitly endorsed when Drašković described them as 'Our state's actions against Albanian terrorism, for which nobody in the world can reproach us.'¹⁵

Drašković also played down the extent to which the human rights of the Kosovo Albanians were being abused, arguing that such abuse existed throughout Serbia,¹⁶ and that the Kosovo Albanians themselves, and not the Serbian authorities, were responsible for their lack of political rights. Drašković argued that had they not boycotted elections, the Kosovo Albanian population could have had 'significant representation' in the Serbian and Yugoslav governments and parliaments, alleging that 'Serbia didn't deprive the Albanians of these rights, rather Rugova boycotted them.'¹⁷ As such, on this issue, the position of the SPO and Drašković was, again, broadly in line with that of the Milošević regime.

Koštunica envisaged that a solution to the Kosovo problem lay in the regionalisation of Serbia, which he envisaged as being along the lines of Spain.¹⁸ Although he argued that Serbia's external borders could not be changed he advocated changing those within the country, 'in order to create compact Serb municipalities in

¹⁴ Beta news agency, 8 March 1998 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3171/A, 10 March 1998.

¹⁵ Radio B92, 3 March 1998 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3167/A, 5 March 1998.

¹⁶ 'Kosovo', Vuk Drašković, *NIN* 2466, 2 April 1998 (author's translation).

¹⁷ 'Kosovo', Vuk Drašković, *NIN* 2466, 2 April 1998. In the same article, Drašković also claimed that Rugova was partly responsible for the maintenance of the Milošević regime in power, stating that by boycotting elections Rugova had 'propped up the regime in Serbia. Now he complains that that regime is not democratic. It's not, thanks to him too' (Author's translation).

Kosovo.’¹⁹ This, he argued, would also facilitate the process of democratisation in Serbia.²⁰ Alongside this regionalisation, Koštunica proposed passing laws at the federal level that would guarantee the rights of all national minorities without singling out the Kosovo Albanians in particular.²¹ Also, like Drašković, and in contrast to the IC, Koštunica was critical of the Kosovo Albanian political leadership, which he characterised as being less willing to compromise than the Serbian authorities.²²

Throughout the entire time period covered by this case study, Koštunica believed that there was an anti-Serb bias in the IC’s approach to events in Kosovo, and that the IC, and in particular the US, was supporting the KLA and was willing to accept an independent Kosovo. This, he believed, had been the case from the earliest days of the break-up of the SFRJ.²³ In addition, Koštunica accused the IC of acting undemocratically and also of undermining democratic forces in Serbia. When asked about the impact of the IC’s position that the Kosovo Albanians must have that which was denied to Serbs in

¹⁸ ‘Kosovo u region’ interview with Vojislav Koštunica in *NIN* 2465, 26 March 1998 (author’s translation). Koštunica’s notion of regionalising Serbia dated back to 1993. See Uroš Komlenović, ‘Ethnic Soccer’, *Vreme News Digest Agency* No. 111, 8 November 1993.

¹⁹ Koštunica quoted in Cigar, 2001, p. 44.

²⁰ ‘Kosovo u region’ interview with Vojislav Koštunica in *NIN* 2465, 26 March 1998 (author’s translation).

²¹ ‘Izgubljena decenija’, interview with Vojislav Koštunica in *NIN* 2485, 13 August 1998 (author’s translation).

²² Koštunica made this claim in August 1998, stating that: ‘When things, observed from the Serbian point of view, get to this situation, when they are practically destroyed, the regime in Belgrade, Milošević’s regime, has demonstrated a willingness to make certain concessions...Until now that has absolutely not been demonstrated on the Albanian side and it is that which is worrying’ (‘Izgubljena decenija’, interview with Vojislav Koštunica in *NIN* 2485, 13 August 1998).

²³ ‘Kosovo u region’ interview with Vojislav Koštunica in *NIN* 2465, 26 March 1998 (author’s translation).

Bosnia and Croatia he stated that 'these kinds of policies of the international community and the leading countries, and above all the USA, not only weaken democratic potential and democratic forces in Serbia, but cause serious damage to the idea of democracy itself.'²⁴

In terms of his vision for a resolution of the Kosovo conflict, Djindjić claimed that he was 'pleading for a status of autonomy for Kosovo,'²⁵ and argued that a resolution to the conflict should rest on rights as opposed to territory, declaring that: 'By this concept, Serbian Albanians could have collective personal, instead of territorial rights. And that means that national minorities could have representation in the federal state, with substantial rights in all questions relating to national identity (language, culture, religion).'²⁶ Pešić also argued against a solution based on territory, stating that although 'ethnic realities and claims must be taken into account, hence the importance of guaranteed rights of autonomy at the local level, but this does not mean giving each ethnic group a state.'²⁷ She also suggested that a 'new concept of citizenship not based primarily on ethnic origin' needed to be introduced in the Balkans.²⁸

While the attitudes of those parties involved in the SZP were generally closer to the IC position than those of the other opposition parties, there were, nevertheless, some differences. Like Drašković and Koštunica, Djindjić was critical of the Kosovo Albanian

²⁴ 'Izgubljena decenija', interview with Vojislav Koštunica in *NIN* 2485, 13 August 1998. In the same interview Koštunica further criticised the IC for acting undemocratically when he stated: 'I would mention another way in which the international community, really the western countries that have a decisive role in the Contact Group, literally walk over the very idea of democracy. That is the practice of representatives of the Contact Group and Slobodan Milošević determining the future legal status of Kosovo in dialogue ... In talks which are absolutely far from the eyes and ears of the public in Serbia there is nothing that would in the least resemble a democratic solution'(author's translation).

²⁵ *Frankfurter Rundschau* 16 March 1998 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/D3178/A, 18 March 1998.

²⁶ 'Prava umesto teritorije', Zoran Djindjić in *NIN* 2467, 9 April 1998 (author's translation).

²⁷ *Liberation*, 15 May 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/D3538/A, 19 May 1999.

political leadership, and questioned its true aims, stating that: 'There exists a well-founded doubt that the Albanian leaders in Kosovo and Metohija are not concerned with democratic rights, but with an independent state, even if that is undemocratic.'²⁹

However, in spite of his suspicions, Djindjić and other SZP leaders travelled to Kosovo in July 1998 to meet with Kosovo Albanian political representatives and to discuss the situation in the province. While the two groups could not reach an agreement on how the conflict might be resolved, they did agree that the violence that was being perpetrated was unacceptable. Furthermore, the visit of Serbia's opposition leaders was welcomed by Fehmi Agani, a leader of one of the most significant Kosovo Albanian political parties.³⁰ In addition, Djindjić attended a conference in Paris on Serbian-Albanian relations organised by the International Human Rights Federation in late September 1998.³¹ While these moves clearly could not have contributed much to resolving the conflict in Kosovo, they do demonstrate a willingness on the part of the SZP leaders to engage with representatives of the Kosovo Albanian leadership, and may have constituted an attempt to convince the IC that their position in relation to the Kosovo dispute was fundamentally different to that of the regime.

In contrast to Drašković, Djindjić was also critical of the Milošević regime and its Kosovo policies, though much of his concern seems to have been primarily for the impact that these policies would have on Serbia itself, rather than on the Kosovo Albanians. In his reaction to the Contact Group's 9 March 1998 statement, Djindjić doubted whether Milošević would meet the demands contained in the statement and expressed concern

²⁸ *Liberation*, 15 May 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/D3538/A, 19 May 1999.

²⁹ 'Prava umesto teritorije', Zoran Djindjić in *NIN* 2467, 9 April 1998 (author's translation).

³⁰ *The Financial Times* (London), 15 July 1998.

about the impact of further sanctions on Serbia's fragile economy. He also was doubtful as to whether the IC's approach could yield results stating that 'this [solution] is dependent on a tolerant and normal policy. You must forgive me, but I doubt that such a thing exists in the ruling regime.'³²

A consistent theme in DS and SZP comments on the situation in Kosovo throughout this time period was the insistence that attaining a long-term political solution in Kosovo would not be possible without the removal of the Milošević regime and the introduction of democratic reforms throughout Serbia. From the outset, Djindjić argued that 'only a truly democratic Serbia would be in a position to truly calm tensions in Kosovo.'³³ In keeping with this, he also believed that the issue of Kosovo's status should be addressed only after the issue of human rights (throughout Serbia, and not just in Kosovo) had been dealt with, arguing that 'If you start with the question of status you will never achieve your objective. It is necessary to force Milošević and his regime to guarantee basic rights and liberties.'³⁴ Djindjić's argued that all of Serbia's citizens needed to be guaranteed human and civil rights and asserted that 'It is difficult for the opposition, which is unable to be granted the rights it wants, to stand up and demand these very rights for other groupings in the same country.'³⁵

³¹ Radio B92, 19 September 1998 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/D3338/A, 22 September 1998.

³² Radio B92, 9 March 1998 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3172/A, 11 March 1998.

³³ Agence France Presse, 10 March 1998.

³⁴ Frankfurter Rundschau, 16 March 1998 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/D3538/A, 18 March 1998. Djindjić also appeared to believe that with the right economic incentives the Kosovo Albanians might be induced to remain within Yugoslavia: 'We must make Yugoslavia economically attractive to the Albanians. It will never be politically, so we must show them with one elected voice in Serbia it will be far easier to become part of the EU than if they were in Albania, and eventually the need to leave us will subside' (*The Scotsman*, 5 May 1998).

³⁵ Frankfurter Rundschau, 16 March 1998 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/D3538/A, 18 March 1998.

The overall position of the democratic opposition parties in relation to Kosovo's status was broadly in line with that of the Milošević regime and the IC: Kosovo's ethnic Albanian population should be granted some degree of autonomy (though not necessarily territorially based), but should remain within the SRJ. However, it is clear that while all the democratic opposition parties advocated the granting of autonomy to Kosovo's Albanians, all were vague as to what this might mean in practice and as such did not present a well-worked out, detailed and viable alternative to the policies being pursued by the regime. Furthermore, there are clear differences, both between the democratic opposition parties themselves and also between the IC and the opposition, regarding responsibility for the conflict. While the IC believed that primary responsibility for the conflict lay with the Serbian authorities, the democratic opposition parties were far more critical of the Kosovo Albanians, and expressed doubts about motives of Kosovo's political leadership. However, the SZP parties were far more critical of Milošević's role in the conflict than were the other parties, and in particular the SPO, and consistently emphasised that the removal of Milošević from power and the introduction of political reform in Serbia were essential prerequisites for any long term solution to the Kosovo conflict.

Attitudes of the democratic opposition parties to international intervention

One of the IC's demands in relation to Kosovo was that there should be negotiations between the Serbian and Albanian sides of the dispute, and it supported Kosovo Albanians demands that there should be foreign mediation in these talks. The

Serbian authorities, however, resisted the notion that international involvement in negotiations was necessary,³⁶ and Milošević tried to evade responsibility regarding this key question by putting the matter to the Serbian people in a referendum on the question 'Do you accept the participation of foreign representatives in the resolution of the problems in Kosovo?'³⁷

The Kosovo referendum and the issue of whether the IC should be involved in attempts to resolve the Kosovo conflict, revealed a significant difference between some of the democratic opposition parties and the Milošević regime regarding the role that the IC should play in resolving the Kosovo conflict. Of the parties considered here, the DS, the DSS and the GSS were all opposed to the Kosovo referendum, and some of the party leaders argued in favour of a role for the IC in dealing with the Kosovo crisis. In addition, there was also a feeling within the democratic opposition that the Kosovo conflict had already been internationalised and that the referendum was therefore meaningless.

Calling for a boycott of the planned referendum, Djindjić argued that the IC did have a role to play, declaring that 'We need observers from the [OSCE] in both Kosovo and the rest of Serbia, and we need them fast.'³⁸ He was also prepared to accept the presence of foreign troops in Kosovo, preferably from the UN, if internal forces proved unable to ensure security in the province.³⁹ However, although not opposed to international mediation Djindjić remained sceptical as to what could be gained from negotiations given the conditions that existed within Serbia at the time: 'I think that the

³⁶ An MP from the SRS, commenting on international demands for mediation in the dispute stated that the US has always 'supported our enemies, and now it wants to destroy the Serbs. If we accept mediation, we will be signing [our own] surrender' (*RFE/RL Newswire*, 8 April 1998).

³⁷ The referendum took place on 23 April and 94.73% of those who voted opposed foreign participation in resolving the Kosovo dispute (Judah, 2000: 152).

³⁸ *Christian Science Monitor*, 17 July 1998.

³⁹ Radio B92, 15 July 1998 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/D3281/A, 17 July 1998.

West is creating an illusion in this regard. Competent negotiations require a lot, for example a system of guarantees and institutions within which such talks can be conducted. You need institutions that guarantee the implementation of the results.⁴⁰ Pešić also supported international intervention to deal with the crisis in Kosovo and argued that the referendum - which she considered to be a means by which Milošević could shift 'the burden of responsibility over to the people, who will thus vote for sanctions and even harder life'⁴¹ - was pointless as the Kosovo question had already been internationalised.⁴² In addition, Koštunica, although generally highly critical of the IC throughout this time period, also opposed the referendum and argued that Kosovo conflict had been 'internationalised in the 1980s through the worry of the West, above all the USA, for the situation of the human rights of the Kosovo Albanians.'⁴³

The position of the SPO and Drašković on the role of the IC is less clear, and shows a degree of inconsistency that may reflect the position of the party at that time.⁴⁴ Drašković was not opposed to internationalising the Kosovo conflict, rather he saw it as essential if war was to be avoided in Kosovo, and appears to have considered that the IC could be an ally in defending Kosovo: 'I believe that we will only defend Kosovo without war in full co-operation with the Contact Group and the European Union.'⁴⁵ Furthermore, when outlining what he would do were he in power, Drašković made clear that he did not

⁴⁰ Frankfurter Rundschau, 16 March 1998 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/D3538/A, 18 March 1998.

⁴¹ Associated Press Worldstream, 2 April 1998.

⁴² AAP Newsfeed, 22 April 1998.

⁴³ 'Kosovo u region' interview with Vojislav Koštunica in *NIN* 2465, 26 March 1998 (author's translation). While frequently critical of the IC's handling of the Kosovo situation, Koštunica did, however, seem to believe that it could work to the benefit of opposition forces within Serbia, stating that: 'The international community is more interested in Kosovo than in democratic elections in Serbia. But they might press for early elections in order to give the Albanians representation' (*The Toronto Star*, 3 April 1998).

object to an international presence in negotiations with the Kosovo Albanian leadership. He stated if he were in such a position, he would form a negotiating team at the highest level and invite Rugova to talks, with Gonzales and American witnesses present if Rugova so desired, and with representatives of the federal state, as the Kosovo Albanians wanted.⁴⁶ However, in spite of this apparent acceptance of an IC role in resolving the conflict, Drašković supported the referendum and urged voters to reject international mediation.⁴⁷ While this call to reject foreign intervention in resolving the dispute in Kosovo may seem to be at odds with Drašković's apparent willingness to allow foreign participation in any talks between the Serbian authorities and Kosovo's political representatives, a closer look at the role Drašković envisioned for the IC in any such talks is revealing. Although Drašković expressed a desire for foreign representatives to be present at negotiations, on several occasions he made clear that their role should be limited to observation rather than mediation.⁴⁸ Speaking in May he stated that he thought the OSCE mission headed by Felipe Gonzales should be accepted, 'but not as a mediator in the dialogue but as a special OSCE envoy.'⁴⁹ In June, he further noted that any international presence at the negotiations should be limited when he pointed out that the

⁴⁴ Although formally part of the opposition, the SPO had been negotiating with the SPS on the possible formation of a coalition government. While the SPS decided to opt for the Radicals as a coalition partner in the Serbian government, Drašković took the SPO into the federal government in January 1999.

⁴⁵ 'Kosovo', Vuk Drašković, *NIN* 2466, 2 April 1998 (author's translation).

⁴⁶ 'Kosovo', Vuk Drašković, *NIN* 2466, 2 April 1998 (author's translation).

⁴⁷ Drašković may not have had the full support of all SPO members on this issue, at least initially. Commenting on the decision to hold the referendum, SPO spokesperson Ivan Kovačević stated that it represented a call for confrontation between [the SRJ] and the international community' (Agence France Presse, 3 April 1998).

⁴⁸ In March 1998, Drašković expressed the belief that the Kosovo Albanians were insisting on an international presence in the talks because 'they are convinced that they would thus be sitting at the negotiating table as representatives of an independent state'. He went on to state that 'international peaceniks should be present at the talks to ease the dialogue, but not to give anyone the legitimacy of an independent state' (Beta news agency, 18 March 1998 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3180/A, 20 March 1998).

⁴⁹ Beta news agency, 14 May 1998 in *BBC Monitoring Europe – Political*, 14 May 1998.

no vote in the referendum did not reject an international role that 'does not influence the talks and impose solutions.'⁵⁰

While the DS, DSS and GSS were prepared to accept an international intervention in the Kosovo dispute, they were critical of the IC's decision to impose sanctions against Serbia. Djindjić objected to the Contact Group's move, arguing that the sanctions would 'punish people, not the regime,'⁵¹ and would 'help Milošević's propaganda that the West is biased, unjust and enemy of Serbs.'⁵² Djindjić stated that sanctions would strengthen the Milošević regime 'because they provide it with an excellent excuse for not implementing fundamental political and economic reforms which are the prerequisite for Serbia's survival.'⁵³ Although Djindjić clearly objected to the sanctions that had been imposed, as was the case in earlier time periods, he believed that international isolation of the Milošević regime could be useful and suggested that international representatives should meet with representatives of the democratic opposition and not Milošević and his associates.⁵⁴ Drašković also objected to the imposition of sanctions at this time, stating that the Contact Group was 'punishing a country which is protecting its borders and preventing the creation of an ethnic Albanian state on its territory.'⁵⁵

In summary, in contrast to the Milošević regime both the DS and the GSS were in agreement with the IC regarding the need for foreign mediation in the Kosovo dispute, with Djindjić going so far as to state that the deployment of foreign troops to Kosovo, under UN auspices, would be acceptable. However, both leaders stressed that without

⁵⁰ Tanjug, 9 June 1998, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3250/A, 11 June 1998.

⁵¹ AAP Newsfeed, 2 May 1998.

⁵² Associated Press Worldstream, 10 May 1998.

⁵³ Beta news agency, 9 September 1998 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/D3329/A, 11 September 1998.

⁵⁴ *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 16 March 1998 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/D3538/A, 18 March 1998.

democratic reform in Serbia and the removal of Milošević from power, long-term stability in Kosovo and the wider region was unlikely. While the DSS was opposed to the Kosovo referendum and argued that the situation in Kosovo had long been internationalised, the party remained extremely critical of the IC and its intervention in Kosovo throughout this time period and as such, Koštunica's argument that Kosovo had been the subject of international concern for many years cannot be seen as an endorsement of international policy. While Drašković's position in relation to the need for international intervention was somewhat contradictory, his and his party's position was considerably closer to that of the Milošević regime than the DS, DSS or GSS.

The NATO Ultimatum and the Holbrooke Agreements

A clear division between the opposition parties is also evident in their reactions to the Holbrooke agreement and the threat of NATO bombing that was used to compel Milošević to accept the agreement. While the SZP parties welcomed the Holbrooke agreements they were concerned that the continued IC practice of negotiating with the regime and also the threat of NATO bombing could undermine democratic forces within Serbia and also expressed concern about the potential of such moves to radicalise and encourage Kosovo Albanian extremists. While the SPO also welcomed the agreement, this can be seen as further evidence of the party's growing closeness to the regime. The DSS was the only party to reject the Holbrooke agreements, and its criticism demonstrates its nationalist orientation at this time.

⁵⁵ AAP Newsfeed, 2 May 1998.

While the SZP welcomed the Holbrooke agreements, opposition leaders again attempted to widen the agenda by reiterating the necessity of democratic reform in Serbia to bring about a long-term solution to the Kosovo problem, and called for support for the democratic opposition.⁵⁶ The GSS emphasised the potential negative impact on Serbia's democratic opposition that could arise from the continued practice of the IC to negotiate with Milošević in its efforts to resolve the Kosovo dispute. Commenting on one of Holbrooke and Gelbard's visits to Milošević, Pešić argued that by considering Milošević as being indispensable to the resolution of the Kosovo conflict they were undermining the prospects for democratic reform in Serbia.⁵⁷ Djindjić was also critical of the IC for negotiating only with Milošević, arguing that Milošević was 'the obstacle to a rational solution to the problem of Kosovo' and was 'not qualified for the negotiations on Kosovo that are currently under way.'⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Associated Press Worldstream, 13 October 1998. While Djindjić was not overly critical of the agreement reached by Milošević and Holbrooke in October, he was critical of its implementation. In a meeting with OSCE chairman Knut Vollebaek, he complained that the presence of the OSCE hadn't brought about a reduction in tension in Kosovo, or an end to violence. Djindjić also commented on the plight of the Serb population in Kosovo, who he claimed were 'feeling increasingly insecure because, having been abandoned by their state, they have become the target of increasingly unprovoked attacks by Kosovo Albanian terrorists' (Bosnian Serb news agency SRNA, 10 January 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3430/A, 12 January 1999). Djindjić also urged the IC to increase its pressure on Milošević to respect the Holbrooke agreements, rather than launch a NATO bombing campaign against the SRJ, arguing that military intervention would not bring peace to Kosovo. He pointed out that under the agreement there was a provision for 2,000 monitors but that there were only 750 in place (Agence France Presse, 20 January 1999).

⁵⁷ Beta news agency, 14 May 1998 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/D3228/A, 16 May 1998.

⁵⁸ Beta news agency, 30 November 1998 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3399/A, 2 December 1998. In addition to his objections to Milošević as a negotiator, Djindjić also vehemently objected to Holbrooke, stating that 'Holbrooke has assumed the role of mediator with a special status. He is not behaving as a diplomat and a politician. Instead, he is like a bulldozer that destroys everything in its way to achieve the aim set by the US administration'. Critical of Holbrooke's meetings with the KLA he went on to say: 'Instead of the negotiations being conducted by OSCE representative Felipe Gonzales, who has great experience in the fight against terrorism and separatism, we get Holbrooke, who acts like a commissioner with a special status' (Beta News Agency, 26 June in *BBC Monitoring Europe - Political*, 26 June 1998). Djindjić called for an explanation from both Holbrooke and the US State Department: 'Mrs. Madeleine Albright's office should issue an official statement explaining why she thinks it is justified and appropriate for Mr. Holbrooke in this way to meet representatives of a terrorist organisation which is engaged in violence on a daily basis' (Radio B92, 26 June in *BBC Monitoring Europe - Political*, 26 June 1998).

Djindjić also objected to the threat of NATO bombing on the grounds that this too could undermine democratic forces in Serbia, and strengthen the regime and could even endanger the lives of the opposition: 'We're marked as traitors in a time of war, Every day we are getting threats.'⁵⁹ Djindjić consistently argued that NATO bombs would serve only to strengthen Milošević stating that a bombing campaign would 'facilitate the imposition of dictatorship in Serbia and turn Serbia into Europe's Iraq, which in the long term will jeopardize the stability of the entire Balkans.'⁶⁰

Djindjić and Pešić also believed that the threat of military intervention in Kosovo would as serve as encouragement to Kosovo Albanian extremists. Djindjić argued that Security Council Resolution 1199, which he believed increased the likelihood of NATO intervention, would serve as encouragement to radical Albanians who would now 'do everything to make a military intervention in Kosovo happen.'⁶¹ Pešić expressed similar concerns and criticised the Contact Group on the grounds that it was too tolerant of KLA violence, arguing that this lessened the possibility of their being a peaceful resolution to the conflict. She called on the Contact Group to 'consider, with utmost seriousness, the armed activities of the so-called [KLA] and its open support for the creation of a greater Albania', arguing that unless the Contact Group used its influence to ensure an end to

⁵⁹ The Philadelphia Inquirer, 7 October 1998.

⁶⁰ Radio B92, 12 October 1998 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3357/A, 14 October 1998.

⁶¹ Beta news agency, 25 September 1998 in *BBC Monitoring Europe - Political*, 25 September 1998. In the same article, Djindjić is also quoted as saying that the IC had 'demonstrated an inability or lack of interest in finding a lasting solution to the Kosovo problem' and singled out Russia for particular criticism stating that by not vetoing the resolution it had 'practically given the green light to NATO to intervene in Kosovo'. At this time, Djindjić also argued that there was an alternative to military action, though he didn't specify what this might be, stating that 'There are two extremes: One is to do nothing, which is what the international community has been doing. The other is bombs. Both of them are wrong. ... I can't believe there's nothing in between' (*The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 7 October 1998).

armed hostilities by all parties to the conflict, political dialogue to resolve the crisis would not succeed.⁶²

The DSS was critical of the Holbrooke agreements, which Koštunica described as 'yet another capitulation by Milošević.' He accused Milošević of failing to preserve Yugoslavia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and of failing to secure a 'favourable status for Kosovo.'⁶³ A DSS spokesperson argued that the plans for Kosovo's future removed the province 'from the legal structure of Serbia and the [SRJ],' alleging that the OSCE monitors 'serve as a force to separate the Serbian and Albanian side, so Kosovo will end up under some sort of international protectorate. There is less and less of Serbia in Kosovo.'⁶⁴ As such, the DSS critique of the Holbrooke agreements was clearly based on nationalist arguments.

In line with its increasing closeness to the regime at this time, Drašković and the SPO welcomed the Holbrooke agreements and the deployment of OSCE observers. The SPO leader stated that the agreement did not 'contain anything detrimental to the interests of our country.'⁶⁵ He also claimed that accepting the proposals to resolve the crisis would 'soon lead to the lifting of all existing economic sanctions against our country, and the

⁶² Beta news agency, 23 June 1998 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/D3262/A, 25 June 1998. Pešić returned to the issue of the KLA in her reaction to the Holbrooke agreements, stating that she did not see how the problem of the return of the KLA to positions abandoned by Serbian forces had been solved within the agreements (Radio B92, 29 October 1998 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/D3372/A, 31 October 1998).

⁶³ Beta news agency, 13 October 1998 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3358/A, 15 October 1998. Beta news agency, 23 November 1998 in *BBC Monitoring Europe – Political*, 23 November 1998.

⁶⁴ Beta news agency, 4 January 1999 in *BBC Monitoring Europe – Political*, 4 January 1999.

⁶⁵ Drašković argued that 'It is in our interest that many observers from the OSCE and other important international organisations come to Kosovo to investigate the crimes against the Serbian population' (Beta news agency, 13 October 1998 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3357/A, 14 October 1998).

door would be opened for significant economic assistance.’⁶⁶

In summary, all of the democratic opposition parties considered here were critical of the IC’s actions with respect to the Kosovo conflict at this time. However, while the DS and the GSS emphasised that international efforts to resolve the conflict that did not address the need for democratic reform in Serbia were unlikely to be successful and were undermining the prospects for democracy, the DSS rejected the Holbrooke agreements on the grounds that they represented a capitulation, and Koštunica and the DSS were critical of Milošević for failing to protect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the SRJ. The SPO accepted the Holbrooke agreements, arguing that they represented a means by which Serbia could be reintegrated into the IC. In this respect, the SPO again held positions that were closer to those of the Milošević regime than the other democratic opposition parties.

Rambouillet and the NATO bombing

By the time the Rambouillet negotiations began in February 1999 a significant change had occurred on the political scene in Serbia, with Drašković and the SPO deciding to enter the federal government on 18 January.⁶⁷ Drašković’s stated reason for

⁶⁶ Beta news agency, 9 October 1998 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3355/A, 12 October 1998. Drašković’s belief that through accepting the Hill proposals Serbia’s international isolation could soon come to an end, would seem to be indicative of a serious misreading of the international mood at this time. Speaking in early November Drašković expressed the belief that international opinion was turning in favour of the Serbs, and that there would be international support for any provocations on the part of the KLA: ‘If they do not get out of the way and continue with their provocations, with kidnapping and pretending to patrol the roads, the international community will certainly give the green light to our antiterrorist units to hit the terrorists with all our might. I believe that the international community will, perhaps, also offer to help out antiterrorist units in rooting out the greatest evil which is today threatening not only Serbia but also the region and the Balkans’ (Tanjug, 8 November 1998 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3380/A, 10 November 1998).

⁶⁷ Tanjug, 18 January 1999, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3437/A, 20 January 1999. Drašković was appointed deputy prime minister with special responsibility for international affairs, while four other SPO members were appointed to the federal cabinet.

joining the federal government was to assist 'in the defence of Kosmet and in the struggle for truth about Kosmet.'⁶⁸ He also expressed the hope that, through the participation of the SPO in government, Yugoslavia's international relations could be improved.⁶⁹ Emphasising the need for political and economic reform, which he identified as his most important task,⁷⁰ Drašković maintained that, in spite of the SPO's participation in the federal government, it remained an opposition party.⁷¹ Drašković's decision to enter the federal government strengthened Milošević's position, giving him effective control of two thirds of both the republican and federal parliaments.⁷²

The democratic opposition parties continued to be critical of the actions of the IC in its efforts to deal with the Kosovo crisis during this phase of the conflict, with objections being raised to both the Rambouillet process and then the NATO bombing campaign. Again, however, significant differences between the parties are evident, although all parties opposed the NATO bombing campaign. However, while the initial reaction of the democratic opposition to NATO's military intervention was to present itself 'primarily as a patriotic force helping the defence of the nation' this changed around the beginning of May as the opposition became more critical of the regime (Ilić, 2000: 4).

⁶⁸ Beta news agency, 19 January 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3437/A, 20 January 1999.

⁶⁹ Beta news agency, 19 January 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3437/A, 20 January 1999.

⁷⁰ Beta news agency, 19 January 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3437/A, 20 January 1999.

⁷¹ According to Drašković the SPO would oppose 'everything that hampers progress, everything that is undemocratic and against the reconciliation with the international community. However, we will never oppose the defence of our country and Kosovo, as the essence of everything that makes us Serbs'. Beta news agency, 19 January 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3438/A, 21 January 1999.

⁷² The Scotsman, 20 January 1999. Pešić commented on Drašković's decision, claiming that as a result Serbia had entered a phase of what she referred to as 'totalitarian pluralism', because it effectively meant an end to any form of parliamentary opposition that could control the government: 'If there is no control over the government, then it cannot work for the good of the state or the people' (Beta news agency, 21 January 1999 in *BBC Monitoring Europe – Political*, 22 January 1999).

Ilić cites an interview given by Drašković in late April, in which he condemned the Serbian authorities handling of the crisis, as a key turning point (Ilić, 2000: 5). While critical of the Rambouillet process, the GSS believed that the authorities should have accepted a settlement at this time. The DS clearly believed that Milošević would accept a settlement at Rambouillet, but did not believe that this would lead to a long-term solution to the conflict. The DSS continued to be the most critical of the parties in relation to international efforts to resolve the Kosovo dispute, raising objections to both the Rambouillet process and also the provisions of the draft agreement for a settlement, and continued to accuse of the IC, and in particular the US, of being biased in favour of the Kosovo Albanians. The DSS also criticised the IC for its role in maintaining Milošević in power, as did the SZP parties. All of the opposition parties advocated the acceptance of the G8 proposals for bringing the conflict to an end, though Koštunica and Djindjić expressed reservations about the content of the proposed settlement.

While Pešić was critical of the Rambouillet negotiations on the grounds that the peace conference would result in a solution being imposed and that it would not 'remove the causes of instability in the region – an undemocratic state – because the solution will not demand elections in Serbia,'⁷³ she nevertheless was adamant that the Serbian authorities should have tried to obtain a settlement at Rambouillet.⁷⁴ That the Serbian government didn't do so, she argued, meant that it bore a great deal of responsibility for the NATO bombing campaign.⁷⁵ Pešić objected to the threat to use military force, however, which would, she claimed, help Milošević to retain power as it would

⁷³ Beta news agency, 28 January 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/D3446/A, 30 January 1999.

⁷⁴ *Liberation*, 15 May 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/D3538/A, 19 May 1999.

⁷⁵ *Liberation*, 15 May 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/D3538/A, 19 May 1999.

‘contribute to further homogenisation of the people and to Serbia’s isolation, which would create circumstances in which Milošević would be justified in ‘agreeing to any kind of agreement in order to save the people and the state.’⁷⁶

While Djindjić had reservations about the Rambouillet agreement, which he claimed would give Kosovo more independence within Yugoslavia than either Serbia or Montenegro, he nevertheless believed that Milošević would accept it ‘if his favourite negotiator Richard Holbrooke promises him that he will stay in power in return,’⁷⁷ and his concern in this regard was echoed by Pešić who accused the West of putting Milošević in a position of guaranteeing a solution in exchange for a promise that ‘his regime would not be touched.’⁷⁸ Djindjić clearly believed that an agreement would be reached at Rambouillet but he was sceptical regarding its ability to provide a long-term solution to the Kosovo conflict, returning again to the need for democratic reform in Serbia. Djindjić claimed that the implementation of any agreement reached in Rambouillet would be problematic because the institutions and political system that would be necessary to grant meaningful autonomy to the Kosovo Albanians did not exist in Milošević’s Serbia, and also because, he claimed, neither side involved in the conflict was interested in a compromise.⁷⁹

Košunica continued to believe that the IC, and in particular the US, was biased in relation to the Kosovo conflict and was highly critical of Rambouillet which he described as ‘a US-Albanian coordinated action plan to the detriment of the Serbs,’ in which there

⁷⁶ Beta news agency, 28 January 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/D3446/A, 30 January 1999.

⁷⁷ Beta news agency, 4 March 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3476/A, 6 March 1999.

⁷⁸ Beta news agency, 28 January 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/D3446/A, 30 January 1999.

⁷⁹ Deutschlandfunk radio, 4 February 1999 in *BBC Monitoring Europe – Political*, 4 February 1999.

would be 'much more diktat than negotiations on the military part of the agreement.'⁸⁰

Koštunica also argued that at the Rambouillet conference, the US made every effort to convince the Albanians to sign in order to allow NATO's military action against Serbia.'⁸¹ In his criticism of the US, Koštunica on several occasions, compared the US administration to the Nazis, and even made a comparison between Clinton and Hitler.⁸²

Koštunica also objected to elements of the proposed settlement at Rambouillet, which he believed represented an infringement of Serbia's and Yugoslavia's sovereignty. He argued that the talks would fail 'unless the very assumptions on which the negotiations are based are changed and unless the idea that Kosovo's statehood is presented as "a wide degree of autonomy" and the occupation of Kosovo as a peaceful solution is abandoned.'⁸³

The SZP parties advocated that the conditions set by the IC for ending the NATO bombing should be accepted, and welcomed the decision of the Serbian authorities to do so. However, Djindjić's call for an acceptance of the proposals seems to have been a pragmatic assessment of the situation in which Serbia found itself. Commenting on the G8 proposal Djindjić stated that: 'In principle I am against everything this proposal contains, but I am in favour of accepting it because we are in no position to set conditions

⁸⁰ Beta news agency, 21 February 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3466/A, 23 February 1999.

⁸¹ Koštunica stated that: 'The negotiations at Rambouillet were doomed the moment American diplomacy stepped through the front door of the castle, explaining what would have to be done if one of the two sides didn't sign the agreement. The Serbs would in that case have to be bombed and the Albanians, with a heavy heart, would be denied help' ('Američka veza' interview with Vojislav Koštunica in *NIN* 2513, 25 February 1999). At a later stage, when the NATO bombing campaign was underway, Koštunica also accused the US of having as its main objective 'the ethnic cleansing of Serbs from Kosovo and placing the province under its control' (Tanjug, 5 April 1999 in *BBC Monitoring Europe – Political*, 6 April 1999).

⁸² Tanjug, 5 April 1999 in *BBC Monitoring Europe – Political*, 6 April 1999. Koštunica also compared NATO to the Nazis in May (Tanjug, 24 May 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3544/A, 26 May 1999).

⁸³ 'Američka veza' interview with Vojislav Koštunica in *NIN* 2513, 25 February 1999 (author's translation).

or make demands. When we ask ourselves what the alternative to this proposal is, the answer is: more air strikes, which is much worse.’⁸⁴ Djindjić went on to assert that the position of the DS was ‘that Milošević ought to accept this accord and try to salvage in this peace what was lost in Rambouillet. If Milošević had accepted the Rambouillet agreement we would have had the opportunity in the next two or three years to recover what was lost in Rambouillet. By entering the war we are losing more and more by the day.’⁸⁵ Pešić also argued that the conditions put forward by the IC to end the NATO bombing campaign should also be accepted, stating that ‘I fail to see why establishing an international protectorate over Kosovo poses a problem,’ and claiming that on this issue the GSS, the DS and Montenegrin president Milo Djukanović were unanimous.⁸⁶

While Koštunica did not advocate rejecting the G8 proposals for an end to the conflict, which, he stated, contained some positive elements, he was more cautious in his acceptance than the other democratic opposition parties. Koštunica noted that there were dangers inherent in the G8 plan as a result of the ambiguity contained in the document regarding the nature of the international force that would be stationed in Kosovo. Arguing that there should be greater clarity in relation to the mandate and duration of such a

⁸⁴ SRNA Bosnian Serb news agency, 13 May 1999 in *BBC Monitoring Europe – Political*, 25 May 1999.

⁸⁵ SRNA Bosnian Serb news agency, 13 May 1999 in *BBC Monitoring Europe – Political*, 25 May 1999. The similarity between the G8 proposal and the Rambouillet agreement was also noted in an official DS statement which welcomed the decision to accept the peace plan but noted that this ‘decision should have been made before the start of war, because the G8 plan accepted today does not differ from the one rejected earlier’ (Agence France Presse, 3 June 1999). DS deputy leader Zoran Živković made the same point on 4 June (Associated Press Worldstream, 4 June 1999).

⁸⁶ *Liberation*, 15 May 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/D3538/A, 19 May 1999.

force.⁸⁷ Koštunica also expressed concern that the proposed resolution would result in Kosovo losing all links with the Republic of Serbia.⁸⁸

Drašković and the SPO began this period as participants in the federal government, and as such cannot be considered to have been part of the democratic opposition at that time. However, while Drašković was critical of NATO for attacking the SRJ, he also became increasingly critical of the regime as the NATO campaign continued, and as Ilić points out, Drašković 'began perceptibly distancing himself from the war policy' (Ilić, 2000: 5). On 26 April, in an interview given to Studio B, Drašković accused the regime of lying to the people of Serbia. He claimed that the IC had dropped the problematic aspects of the Rambouillet proposals and as such the authorities should accept the IC's conditions for bringing a halt to the bombing campaign. He argued that Yugoslavia had achieved all that it could at this time, that acceptance of the IC's demands did not constitute a threat to Serbia's national or state interests, and that a UN force would be acceptable in Kosovo.⁸⁹ Two days later Drašković was sacked as deputy prime minister because of his 'public statements against government positions, and for damaging the government's prestige.'⁹⁰ Throughout the remainder of the NATO campaign Drašković urged the Serbian authorities to accept the G8 conditions for ending the bombing, and welcomed Milošević's decision to do so in late May.

⁸⁷ Tanjug, 11 May 1999 in *BBC Monitoring Europe – Political*, 11 May 1999. Koštunica was also critical of the draft UN Security Council resolution that was based on the G8 proposal, again noting that it contained many ambiguities and emphasising in particular that: 'It is not good that the main bone of contention between Russia and NATO, i.e. the issue of command over what is known as the international security presence, is not mentioned in the draft resolution and that it be resolved through some separate, bilateral agreements.' (Bosnian Serb news agency SRNA, 9 June 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3558/A, 11 June 1999).

⁸⁸ Bosnian Serb news agency SRNA, 9 June 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3558/A, 11 June 1999.

⁸⁹ Studio B TV web site, 26 April 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3520/A, 28 April 1999.

As in earlier phases of the Kosovo crisis, the SZP parties expressed concern at the impact that international policy might have on the democratic opposition, and also expressed concern that the IC would be willing to accept Milošević's continuance in power if he accepted international proposals for resolving the Kosovo conflict. Speaking during the NATO bombing campaign, Pešić complained that the West 'strikes deals with [Milošević] and continues regarding him as a partner with whom it can negotiate peace. It is leaving us with him in a country reduced to a heap of rubble.'⁹¹ Suggesting that an alternative approach from the IC might be more useful, she called on the West to stop 'taking nothing but ethnic rights into account' and support 'the citizens of Yugoslavia and Serbia who want to create a real democracy, the sole key to lasting peace.'⁹²

Djindjić also suggested that an alternative approach on the part of the IC would have been far more successful against the regime, arguing that 'Milošević could be far more easily eliminated through the development of democracy here than through air strikes,' and noting that the US had spent more money on one day's bombs than it ever spent helping the democratic opposition in Serbia.⁹³ Djindjić also expressed concern regarding the increase in anti-Western feeling that would result from the bombing, stating that 'The people here now identify Western democracy with bombs.'⁹⁴ Like Djindjić and Pešić, Koštunica criticised the IC, and in particular the US, for its role in maintaining Milošević in power, stating that: 'We can wonder to what extent the democratic world

⁹⁰ Agence France Presse, 28 April 1999.

⁹¹ *Liberation*, 15 May 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/D3538/A, 19 May 1999.

⁹² *Liberation*, 15 May 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/D3538/A, 19 May 1999.

⁹³ *New York Times*, 29 March 1999.

⁹⁴ *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 9 April 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3506/A, 12 April 1999. Djindjić also noted the impact that this anti-Western feeling might have on the DS, as the party's 'entire political identity is closely tied to Europe and America. For most people here, Europe has become identical with NATO, which is identical with bombs'. For this reason, according to Djindjić, the DS was 'the biggest loser in this war' (*The Washington Post*, 12 April 1999).

has conserved an authoritarian regime in Serbia, to what extent Washington has the credit for maintaining Slobodan Milošević in power and that which his power represents in Serbia. That credit is very great.'⁹⁵

In summary, during this phase of the conflict, the positions of the democratic opposition parties in relation to the conflict in Kosovo and the international response to it conform to the same pattern as during earlier phases of the conflict. While all were critical of the IC, the DS and the GSS emphasised the negative impact that IC policy would have on the prospects for democratic reform in Serbia, and continued to be critical of international engagement with Milošević. However, both of these parties argued that Milošević should have accepted a settlement in Rambouillet. The DSS and the SPO rejected the Rambouillet proposals, though given that the SPO had joined the federal government by this stage it had lost its status as an opposition party. All parties argued that the G8 proposals for ending the conflict should be accepted, though the DSS expressed reservations, while the DS's acceptance of the proposals seems to have been a pragmatic assessment based on the situation in which Serbia found itself.

In considering the attitudes of the democratic opposition to the Kosovo conflict as a whole, it is clear that, while all parties became increasingly critical of international policy as the international reaction to the conflict became more severe, there were clear differences between the position's of the SZP parties and the DSS, and those of the Milošević regime. The SPO held positions that were generally in line with those of the Milošević regime, going so far as to join the federal government in January 1999. As such, the SPO cannot be considered to have been a credible alternative to the Milošević

⁹⁵ 'Američka veza' interview with Vojislav Koštunica in *NIN* 2513, 25 February 1999 (author's translation).

regime from an IC perspective at this time. Similarly, while the DSS was far more critical of regime than was the DS, its criticism was based on a strong nationalist perspective and therefore put its position at odds with that of the IC. The SZP parties, however, while critical of international policy, generally maintained positions that were broadly in line with those of the IC, supported international intervention in the conflict and were even willing to accept an international military presence in Kosovo. Furthermore, much of their criticism of international policy related to their belief that, in the absence of democratic reform, there could be no long-term solution to the Kosovo conflict. As such, the SZP held positions that were closer to those of the IC than were those of the Milošević regime and as such can be considered as a credible alternative partner from an IC perspective.

Challenges to the Milošević regime

As noted above, there were no major opposition challenges to the Milošević regime during this time period. However, in spite of the clearly unfavourable environment, the democratic opposition parties, and particularly the DS and the GSS were not entirely inactive. In 1998 both of these parties were central to the formation of an opposition alliance, the SZP, and began plans to stage anti-regime demonstrations. However, these plans were ultimately put on hold as a result of the NATO bombing campaign.

While Milošević had been employing steadily more repressive tactics in his efforts to retain power in Serbia throughout the 1990s, in 1998 and 1999 this tendency

continued at an accelerated pace, with moves against the autonomy of Serbia's universities and also against the independent media drawing particular criticism from the opposition. While large scale, sustained demonstrations of the kind seen in earlier time period did not result from these moves, the democratic opposition parties did, nonetheless, strenuously object to these measures.

The Alliance for Change (SZP)

The Alliance for Change was founded in June 1998 and initially included the DS, the GSS and four other opposition parties, though a number of other opposition parties and organisations would join over the course of the following year. In addition to these parties, the SZP also included a number of high profile public figures as members, including Milan Panić, who was a key figure in the establishment of the SZP, and Dragoslav Avramović (Milošević, 2000: 129). The Alliance declared that its goal was the 'establishment of [a] modern democratic state, re-construction of the economy and return to the world community' (CeSID, 2000: 79), and planned to challenge Milošević through anti-regime demonstrations with the aim of forcing early elections in Serbia.

From the outset the SZP made efforts to secure international support for its planned efforts to oust Milošević. Apparently convinced that they could defeat Milošević in any fair electoral contest, the main request that the Alliance members made from the IC was that it use its influence to ensure that free and fair elections could be held in Serbia. To this end they emphasised the need for international support for the

increasingly beleaguered independent media.⁹⁶ Furthermore, clearly intending to demonstrate that it represented a credible alternative to the Milošević regime, the SZP also expressed support for international efforts to achieve a ceasefire in Kosovo, and at a meeting with Gelbard in July 1998, requested that the IC continue these efforts.⁹⁷ Speaking in advance of the meeting, Panić also stated that he intended to ask Gelbard to push the IC to send observers to Kosovo in an effort to bring the fighting to an end.⁹⁸

During this time period the SZP had frequent meetings with IC representatives both in Serbia when those representatives visited, and also outside Serbia, and used every opportunity to undermine Milošević's legitimacy by raising the issue of the undemocratic character of the regime. As such, the democratic opposition clearly enjoyed a higher international profile than it had prior to the Zajedno demonstrations in 1996 and 1997. The increased international profile of the democratic opposition parties coincided with an increased level of international criticism of Milošević, not only in relation to Kosovo, but also in relation to the lack of democracy in Serbia, which, while significantly less important to the IC than was the Kosovo crisis, nevertheless was a regular feature in international criticism of the Serbian authorities. Continuing a trend that began in the previous time period, the need for democratic reform in Serbia in order to secure the lifting of the outer wall of sanctions was repeatedly stressed by US officials.

Furthermore, during the time period considered in this case study, IC representatives began to publicly identify Milošević as being a significant source of all problems in the former Yugoslavia, as the democratic opposition parties had long argued.

⁹⁶ Peace Watch Online, December 1998, United States Institute of Peace. Available at: <http://www.usip.org/peacewatch/1998/1298/pw1298.html>; National Public Radio, NPR Morning Edition, 10 December 1998, Transcript # 98121015-210.

⁹⁷ PR Newswire, 27 July 1998.

According to the US State Department's James Rubin at a press briefing on 1 December: 'Milošević has been at the center of every crisis in the former Yugoslavia over the last decade. He is not simply part of the problem: Milošević is the problem,'⁹⁹ while Austrian foreign minister Wolfgang Scheussel, following a meeting with Djindjić and speaking on behalf of the EU, noted that Milošević 'was part of the problem, not the solution.'¹⁰⁰

In spite of increasing international criticism of Milošević, IC representatives also made clear that they would continue to negotiate with the regime to try and resolve the Kosovo crisis.¹⁰¹ This continued international engagement with Milošević in order to reach an agreement that would bring the fighting in Kosovo to an end was criticised by the democratic opposition parties, who considered that this was helping to sustain Milošević and in so doing was causing damage to the prospects of democratic reform in Serbia. Nebojša Čović, in his capacity as SZP co-ordinator, addressed a hearing of the American Helsinki Commission in late 1998 and noted that one of the sources of Milošević's power was 'the legitimacy, given de facto to him by the international community.'¹⁰² At the same hearing Milan Panić urged the IC to stop meeting with Milošević because:

If international leaders no longer parade to Belgrade to meet with him, his public image will quickly fade, and it will become apparent to an overwhelming majority of Serbs that his regime no longer enjoys international legitimacy. Those international leaders who want to encourage

⁹⁸ Associated Press Worldstream, 20 July 1998.

⁹⁹ US Department of State, Daily Press Briefing, 1 December 1998.

¹⁰⁰ Associated Press Worldstream, 4 December 1998.

¹⁰¹ Ambassador Christopher Hill, US Special Envoy for Kosovo. 'Remarks at meeting with members of the independent media', Belgrade, 3 December 1998.

democracy in Serbia should meet with the leaders of the Serbian opposition on every possible occasion, not with those who repress democracy.¹⁰³

In January 1999, Djindjić outlined the SZP's strategy for the coming year, stating that there would be an initial phase of protest rallies throughout Serbia's major towns and cities, this followed by demands for elections in the autumn with a final phase that would be devoted to ensuring that the elections would be free and fair. In this regard he noted the need for international support, claiming that the support of the OSCE and other IC institutions 'could be enough to guarantee the right conditions in Serbia for honest elections.'¹⁰⁴ However, Djindjić also noted that the primary condition for the demonstrations to go ahead was 'that there should be no war or air strikes in Kosovo. Otherwise we would have to call the whole thing off.'¹⁰⁵ NATO's air attacks against the SRJ effectively brought to an end any possibility of the SZP going ahead with its plans. In early April, Djindjić commented on the impact of the bombing on the democratic opposition:

At present we are not active politically, not only because of martial law but also because the populace does not want that at all. The priorities are different now. Everyone has friends or children who may be sent to Kosovo for military duty. Everyone is fearful and the people are not interested in politics when they are fearful. As long as war prevails we cannot talk about

¹⁰² 'The Milošević Regime Versus Serbian Democracy and Balkan Stability', Hearing before the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, 10 December 1998. Available at <http://www.csce.gov>, 19 September 2006.

¹⁰³ 'The Milošević Regime Versus Serbian Democracy and Balkan Stability', Hearing before the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, 10 December 1998. Available at <http://www.csce.gov>, 19 September 2006.

¹⁰⁴ *Glas Javnosti*, 12 January 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3432/A, 14 January 1999.

¹⁰⁵ *Glas Javnosti*, 12 January 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3432/A, 14 January 1999.

unemployment and wages. We have now been practically wiped out. If elections were held today, we would get zero per cent.'¹⁰⁶

Pešić also noted the detrimental impact of the NATO campaign on those working against the regime inside Serbia, pointing out that the bombing was:

not making the job of the democratic opposition in Serbia any easier ... it is difficult to persuade people of the validity of Western democratic ideas used to justify the strikes. ... It is pointless, indeed irritating, to hear the West say it is against the regime but not against the Serbian people. People do not draw the distinction when the bombs are falling on them.¹⁰⁷

In addition to forcing the SZP to cancel its campaign against the Milošević regime Djindjić also feared for his personal safety during the bombing, and claims to have been shown a 'hit list' with his and independent journalist Slavko Ćuruvija's names at the top.¹⁰⁸ When Ćuruvija was assassinated, Djindjić relocated to Montenegro, where he spent his time working closely with Milo Djukanović to prepare an opposition strategy for the post war period. To this end, Djukanović and Djindjić wrote an article that was published in the *New York Times*, entitled 'After The War In Serbia Is Over', in which they outlined their vision for post-war Yugoslavia and also what they believed was

¹⁰⁶ Frankfurter Rundschau, 9 April 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3506/A, 12 April 1999. In a similar comment on the marginalisation of the opposition within Serbia, Djindjić also noted that the bombing was having a similar effect on 'those moderates and democrats among the ethnic Albanians' (*New York Times*, 29 March 1999).

¹⁰⁷ *Liberation*, 15 May 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, EE/D3538/A, 19 May 1999. Djindjić also made the point that the 'people do not see the intervention as being against the president but against their country' and went on to state that he regretted 'very much that Western policy and European values are now equated with NATO and bombs' (Frankfurter Rundschau, 9 April 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3506/A, 12 April 1999).

necessary from the IC to make this a reality, pointing out that 'outside world needs to do more than solve the Kosovo crisis.'¹⁰⁹

In summary, while the SZP was unable to go ahead with its planned anti-regime demonstrations, and thus lost an opportunity to draw attention to the lack of legitimacy of the regime in the domestic arena, the SZP used the higher international profile of the democratic opposition to continuously highlight the undemocratic nature of the regime at the international level in an effort to undermine Milošević's external legitimacy. However, while the IC became increasingly critical of the Milošević regime throughout this time period, it continued to negotiate with the regime in an effort to resolve the Kosovo conflict, in spite of the objections of the SZP whose leaders argued that this was doing much to strengthen the regime within Serbia. Furthermore, the SZP also noted the extent to which its efforts to oppose the regime were being undermined by international policy, an effect that was most noticeable in the SZP's abandonment of its planned anti-regime demonstrations as a result of the NATO bombing campaign.

Increasing repression

While to a greater or lesser extent repression had been a tool of the Milošević regime throughout the 1990s, his need to resort to such tactics increased in the late 1990s. According to a report by Human Rights Watch, while the IC focused on the developing crisis in Kosovo, Milošević used his 'control of the Serbian parliament to enact and implement draconian new laws severely restricting independent media and freedom of

¹⁰⁸ Djindjić makes these claims in the BBC series 'The Fall of Milošević', Episode 2, broadcast on BBC television, 12 January 2003 and in an interview given to the Bosnian Serb news agency SRNA on 13 May 1999 reproduced in *BBC Monitoring Europe – Political*, 15 May 1999.

¹⁰⁹ *New York Times*, 8 May 1999.

expression.’¹¹⁰ Of particular note during this time period were a law that effectively abolished the autonomy of Serbia’s universities, and a public information law that imposed severe restrictions on the independent media.

At the end of May 1998, in a move that was perceived as revenge for the student protests in 1996 and 1997, the Serbian government passed a new law on universities that gave the government control over state universities, effectively abolishing their autonomy.¹¹¹ The law gave the Serbian authorities the power to appoint presidents and deans of state universities, in addition to other staff, and required that all staff, regardless of their previous terms of employment, sign new contracts that were seen by many as being in effect an oath of loyalty to the regime.¹¹² In protest at the move, the president of Belgrade University resigned on 27 May while students announced that they would strike and organise protest rallies in towns throughout Serbia.¹¹³

Protests began even before the law was passed, beginning on 25 May and included a demonstration organised by the SZP. Over the coming days the police acted with force to break up the ongoing student demonstrations and also prevented protestors from marching through Belgrade.¹¹⁴ The democratic opposition parties supported the students in their protests, condemning the new law and the violence that had been used against the demonstrators.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁰ ‘Deepening Authoritarianism in Serbia: The Purge of the Universities,’ Human Rights Watch, January 1999. Available at: <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/serbia/index.htm#TopOfPage>.

¹¹¹ Beta news agency, 28 May 1998 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3240/A, 30 May 1998.

¹¹² ‘Deepening Authoritarianism in Serbia: The Purge of the Universities,’ Human Rights Watch, January 1999. Available at: <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/serbia/index.htm#TopOfPage>.

¹¹³ Beta news agency, 28 May 1998 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3240/A, 30 May 1998

¹¹⁴ Beta news agency, 26 May 1998 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3238/A, 28 May 1998; Beta news agency, 2 June 1998 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3244/A, 4 June 1998; *Financial Times*, 28 May 1998.

¹¹⁵ Beta news agency, 26 May 1998 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3238/A, 28 May 1998.

The law on universities and the use of violence to deal with the demonstrators received little, if any, international attention. There were no statements of support for the students or condemnations of the Milošević regime's use of violence to deal with the protestors by any significant international actors. On the contrary, the IC decided at this time to suspend the implementation of sanctions against Serbia that had been proposed by the Contact Group on 8 May because Milošević had agreed to hold talks with Rugova.¹¹⁶ In addition, following the suspension of negotiations between the Serbs and Albanians and an increase in the level of violence in Kosovo, the statements that accompanied the decisions to implement those sanctions that had been suspended mentioned only the situation in Kosovo, and made no reference to the increasing level of repression inside Serbia.

Demands for media liberalisation in Serbia were a constant theme in opposition rhetoric throughout the duration of Milošević's rule and had been the rationale for numerous anti-regime campaigns and protests throughout the 1990s as the regime grew ever more repressive. The level of repression of the independent media in Serbia increased significantly in the time period considered here. Regime efforts to stifle the independent media in 1998 began in May, around the same time as the law on universities was passed, when federal government refused to grant permits to all but three of thirty independent television and radio stations that had applied for licenses earlier that year. Of those that were granted licences, the government demanded exceptionally high

¹¹⁶ Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Press Conference, Luxembourg, 28 May 1998; Council of Ministers Press Release, PRES: 98/162, 2097th Council meeting – General Affairs – Brussels, 25 May 1998.

payments for the use of the allotted frequencies.¹¹⁷ While the International Association of Free Press (IFEX) condemned the Yugoslav authorities, describing the decision to set the fees at such a high rate as 'deliberate attempt to silence independent media and voices,'¹¹⁸ there was little other international reaction to media repression at this time. As noted above in relation to the university law, the IC was preoccupied with events in Kosovo in late May 1998 and as such matters relating to the undemocratic nature and actions of the Milošević regime did not feature prominently on the international agenda.

In October 1998, the Milošević regime used the threat of NATO air strikes to further undermine the independent media. On 8 October the Serbian government issued a 'Decree on Special Measures in Conditions of Threats of NATO Attacks' which included measures aimed at the media, including a ban on re-broadcasting foreign media programmes which 'damage the interests of our country, which spread fear, panic or defeatism, or which negatively affect citizens' willingness to preserve the integrity of Serbia and Yugoslavia.'¹¹⁹ The decree stipulated that 'Media outlets ... must not spread defeatism and act contrary to national unity and to our state interests.'¹²⁰ According to Human Rights Watch, within a few days of the decree, Serbian police closed down three newspapers and two radio stations.¹²¹

Within weeks of passing the Decree the situation for the independent media deteriorated even further. While the Decree was suspended and those publications that

¹¹⁷ The fees for a television station covering an area of a city with a population of 1.5 million would be obliged to pay 40,000DM per month, while a station covering more than one city would have to pay 60,000 DM per month (Beta news agency, 21 May 1998 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, World Broadcast Information*, WBI/0022/WB, 29 May 1998).

¹¹⁸ Beta news agency, 21 May 1998 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, World Broadcast Information*, WBI/0022/WB, 29 May 1998.

¹¹⁹ Agence France Presse, 9 October 1998.

¹²⁰ Associated Press Worldstream, 9 October 1998.

had been banned were again free to publish, the Serbian parliament passed a Law on Public Information on 20 October that incorporated many of the Decree's provisions. The new law included a prohibition against re-broadcasting of foreign radio and television programmes and high fines for those who breached its provisions, and granted significant powers to the authorities to determine which reports were unlawful.¹²² According to a report by the Beta news agency which considered the implications of the new law: 'Legal experts and owners of private and independent media are unanimous in assessing that the new law enables the authorities - by arbitrarily interpreting the law's rather vague provisions and prescribing high fines - to practically ban any media not to their liking.'¹²³

In line with the more critical stance that the IC was taking with respect to Milošević at this time, the IC condemned regime attempts to repress the independent media through both the Decree and the information law. On 9 October, the day after the Special Decree was announced, the US State Department issued a statement condemning the Serbian authorities 'actions against Serbian civil society.' The statement noted not only the actions against the independent media but also the 'politically-motivated dismissals at Belgrade University's law faculty,' and called on the Serbian government to 'reinstate dismissed professors, ensure that no further dismissals take place, and repeal legislation mandating these dismissals.'¹²⁴ Furthermore, less than a week later, the US State Department issued a statement condemning the closure of independent media

¹²¹ Human Rights Watch World Report 1999. Available at <http://www.hrw.org/worldreport99/europe/yugoslavia.html>, 1 September 2006.

¹²² Associated Press Worldstream, 20 October 1998.

¹²³ Beta news agency, 22 October 1998 in *BBC Monitoring World Media*, 23 October 1998.

¹²⁴ 'United States Condemns Belgrade's Actions Against Serbian Civil Society,' US Department of State Office of the Spokesman, Press Statement, 9 October 1998.

outlets under the provisions of the Decree.¹²⁵ The EU response's was harsher still, imposing a visa ban against nineteen named Serbian and Yugoslav officials that it considered were responsible for the repressive measures taken against the independent media.¹²⁶

In summary, in May 1998 the IC, preoccupied with Kosovo, did not take the opportunity to condemn Milošević's attempts to undermine dissenting voices within Serbia, choosing instead to ease sanctions against Serbia in recognition of Milošević's agreement to hold talks with Rugova. As such, this action would appear to confirm the fears of the democratic opposition parties that the IC would not object to Milošević's undemocratic practices if he conceded to international demands with respect to Kosovo. However, by October 1998, the IC was becoming increasingly critical of Milošević, identifying his regime as a significant source of the problems that beset the former Yugoslavia during the 1990s, and not part of their solution. As such, the international reaction to the regime's efforts to silence the independent media at the end of 1998 was considerably more critical than had been the case in May, and saw sanctions imposed as a result of Serbia's undemocratic internal order.

¹²⁵ 'United States Denounces Belgrade's Offensive Against Serbian Media,' US Department of State Office of the Spokesman, Press Statement, 15 October 1998.

¹²⁶ Radio B92, 16 December 1998 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3413/A, 18 December 1998.

Conclusions

Differences between the democratic opposition parties and the Milošević regime

While the democratic opposition parties and the Milošević regime were united in opposing independence for Kosovo, this was also the position of all international actors who responded to events in Kosovo and as such cannot be considered controversial. However, notwithstanding this broad similarity, there were some significant differences between the democratic opposition parties and the Milošević regime in relation to the Kosovo dispute. Throughout this time period there were essentially three opposition perspectives coming from the four parties considered here. Firstly, the DS and the GSS, at this time united within the SZP, held positions that were closer to those of the IC than were those of the other two parties. The DSS remained extremely critical of international policy and actions in the IC's dealings with Serbia, and also of the Milošević regime, and maintained its position as the most nationalist of the four parties. The SPO's positions were often inconsistent but were generally closer to those of the Milošević regime than were those of the other parties considered here.

Regarding the role of the IC in resolving the Kosovo conflict, both the DS or the GSS considered quite extensive international involvement in Kosovo to be acceptable. Both parties consistently argued that international involvement was necessary to resolve the conflict, and from the early stages of the crisis Djindjić went so far as to state that the presence of UN troops in Kosovo as a last resort would be acceptable. In contrast, the DSS objected strenuously to the idea that an international military force would be stationed in Kosovo, and as such the DSS position was closer to that of the regime than

either the DS and the GSS on this issue. For its part, the SPO supported the regime's referendum and called for a rejection of international involvement in the resolution of the conflict, making it the party that held a position closest to that of the regime on this issue. As such, on this issue, only the SZP can be considered to have been a credible alternative to the Milošević regime from an IC perspective.

Similarly there were also differences between some of the opposition parties and the regime in terms of their attitudes to international actions aimed at resolving the Kosovo conflict. Both the DS and GSS consistently urged the regime to accept international demands to resolve the conflict. In this however, there is noticeable degree of pragmatism from Djindjić who appears to have seen acceptance of some international terms as the lesser of two evils, being preferable to international military intervention, but with provisions that the DS leader viewed as unfavourable. This is clear in the DS's acceptance of both the Holbrooke agreements and the G8 conditions for bringing an end to the NATO bombing. However, although the DS did view some of the international conditions as being less than ideal, the party and its leader, nevertheless, advocated their acceptance, and the DS was critical of the regime for not doing so in the early stages of the crisis. The GSS also urged acceptance of the IC's demands, including arguing that the regime should have signed the Rambouillet agreement and thus avoided the NATO bombing campaign. In contrast, the DSS was opposed to both the Holbrooke agreements and the Rambouillet proposals. Although Koštunica did advocate accepting the G8 proposals, he did so with little enthusiasm, and like Djindjić, seems to have considered this to be the lesser of two evils. However, in contrast to the DS whose criticism of the Milošević regime focused on its failure to prevent the NATO bombing, the DSS

emphasised the effective loss of Serbian control of Kosovo in its critique of Milošević's policies.

The position of the SPO reflected, to a large extent, that of the regime throughout this phase of the crisis, with the party supporting the Holbrooke agreements while objecting strenuously to the Rambouillet proposals. However, from late April, the SPO became increasingly critical of the regime's refusal to accept international demands for an end to the bombing campaign, and advocated acceptance of the G8 plan to end the conflict arguing that it did not represent any danger to Serbia's state and national interests. For Drašković, the Serbian authorities had gained all that it could from its war policy, and as such should now pursue an end to the bombing campaign.

Given these positions, again it is clear that only the DS and the GSS held positions that were closer to those of the IC than those of the Milošević regime, and only these parties can be considered to have represented a credible alternative to the Milošević regime.

The relationship between the IC and democratic opposition parties

The democratic opposition parties, and in particular the SZP, continued to enjoy the higher international profile that had resulted from the Zajedno protests in 1996/1997 and regularly met with international representatives to discuss the situation in Serbia. In spite of this, however, throughout this time period all of the democratic opposition parties were critical of the IC and the way in which it dealt with the Kosovo conflict, with the central criticisms being the negative impact that such actions would have on the

democratic opposition within Serbia, the continuing international practice of negotiating with Milošević, and a perception of bias on the part of the democratic opposition parties. However, while all of the parties commented on these issues, there was a difference in emphasis between the critique of the DS and GSS, and that of the SPO and DSS.

From the beginning of the crisis in Kosovo the DS consistently emphasised the need for democratic reform in Serbia and the removal of Milošević from power in order to resolve the conflict in Kosovo, and as such much of the party's criticism of the IC focused on this issue. Thus, while welcoming any initiatives that might have brought an end to the conflict, the DS expressed doubt regarding their ability to bring long-term peace and stability to Kosovo. In a similar vein, the DS and GSS were highly critical of IC actions with respect to Kosovo because of the potentially negative impact on democratic forces in Serbia. Both parties argued that the IC's approach of using sanctions and bombing would greatly undermine the democratic opposition and strengthen the regime, and were highly critical of the IC for continuing to negotiate with Milošević, arguing that an end to the Kosovo conflict and regional stability in general would be more easily achieved through removing Milošević rather than through the renewed isolation of Serbia.

In spite of its criticism of the IC, both the DS and the GSS continued to maintain good relations with the IC, even at the height of the NATO campaign when Djindjić and Pešić travelled to Europe with Milo Djukanović to meet European leaders. With the opposition completely marginalized as a result of the bombing, and Djindjić in virtual exile in Montenegro, the DS leader chose to focus his attention on the post-war period. Djindjić clearly believed that international support would be crucial if the democratic

opposition in Serbia was to have any success in ousting Milošević. Realising that, following the NATO bombing campaign, Milošević was highly unlikely ever to be considered as a partner of the West again, Djindjić sought international support for his and Djukanović's campaign to remove the regime from power once the bombing ceased. Thus, while Djindjić may have been critical of the IC's efforts to bring the war in Kosovo to an end, and in particular the NATO campaign, his criticism was measured and there was no significant degree of anti-Westernism from him or his party. On the contrary, both Djindjić and Pešić clearly saw anti-Westernism as an obstacle to their political activities against the regime and lamented the increasing anti-Western feeling that had developed in Serbia as a result of the IC's actions.

While the DSS was also critical of the IC's actions and their negative impact on the development of democracy in Serbia, this was a less prominent element in the party's criticism of international action in Kosovo than was the case with DS and GSS. In addition, at times the DSS's criticism of the IC during this time period was considerably more vitriolic than that of the DS and GSS, which sometimes gave it a strong anti-Western tone. A persistent theme in DSS comments on the international involvement in the Kosovo crisis was that of the existence of an anti-Serb bias in the international approach. While there appears to have been a similar perception within the DS and GSS, in particular in relation to their comments on IC attitudes to Kosovo Albanian violence, this was a relatively minor element in those parties' comments on the Kosovo crisis. In contrast, the DSS and also the SPO, were more critical in this regard. The primary target of allegations of bias on the part of the DSS was the US, though European states and NATO were also criticised. Koštunica frequently expressed the belief that the US was

colluding with the KLA against Serbia, and alleged that the Rambouillet negotiations were deliberately set up in order to provide a pretext for bombing Yugoslavia. Similar sentiments were expressed by the SPO.

The impact of international policy on the democratic opposition parties

International policy with respect to the Kosovo conflict had a profound impact on the democratic opposition parties and their effectiveness in opposing the Milošević regime at this time, making any sustained anti-regime campaigns practically impossible. Furthermore, international policy greatly undermined the ability of the democratic opposition parties to carry out any of the tasks necessary to effectively oppose the regime (resisting integration; maintaining a zone of ideological autonomy; questioning the legitimacy of the regime and raising the costs of authoritarian rule; and presenting a credible alternative domestically and internationally).

The DS, GSS and DSS successfully resisted integration into the regime, but the SPO, which had been drawing closer to the regime since 1997, was fully co-opted in January 1999 when it joined the federal government. Although it was expelled shortly afterwards, the decision of the SPO to join the government, and the extreme closeness of its positions to those of the regime prior to January 1999, mean that the SPO effectively abandoned its status as an opposition party at this time.

While the democratic opposition parties were successful in terms of highlighting the undemocratic nature of the Milošević regime and thus undermining the regime's legitimacy at the international level, there was little opportunity to carry out this task at

the domestic level. In addition, while the SZP can certainly have been considered to have successfully presented a credible alternative to the Milošević regime from an IC perspective, the lack of any sustained or significant campaigns against the regime gave it no real opportunity to do so within Serbia. Furthermore, with the threat of NATO bombing hanging over Serbia for much of the time period, and the eventual use of military force against the SRJ in 1999, the Milošević regime introduced severely repressive legislation designed to undermine and eliminate regime opponents. As such, with the possibility of a NATO attack dominating the domestic agenda, and the increased repression of opposition forces, the political space in which the opposition could operate was all but eliminated. Similarly, in such circumstances the Kosovo conflict and the international reaction to it dominated political discourse in Serbia, undermining the ability of the opposition to maintain a zone of ideological autonomy.

While the Zajedno coalition had had considerable success in highlighting the undemocratic nature of the Milošević regime, the events of this case study demonstrate that the need for democratic reform in Serbia had still not become an IC priority. While the opposition certainly enjoyed a higher international profile, and received considerably more expressions of international support than it had in the past, it is clear that, up until the NATO bombing, the IC was making no significant effort to strengthen the opposition. Its efforts to resolve the Kosovo conflict involved the same approach as had its earlier efforts to resolve the Bosnian conflict: applying pressure on Milošević in the hope that this would lead to the concessions necessary to achieve its objectives, and in the process undermining the effectiveness of the opposition.

Chapter 7: The Fall of Milošević

This case study covers the time period from June 1999 when the NATO bombing came to an end and October 2000 when Milošević conceded defeat in the federal presidential election that had been held in September. The main distinguishing feature of this time period is that, for the first time, the IC and the democratic opposition parties were prioritising the same objective: the removal of the Milošević regime from power. As a result of events in Kosovo and the ICTY indictments of Milošević and his associates, the IC made it clear that it could no longer do business with Milošević and his regime, called for his removal, and openly supported efforts by the opposition to bring an end to his rule. The IC aimed to achieve its goal of removing Milošević through a combination of sanctions - increasingly making efforts to target these directly at the regime - and assistance to democratic forces within Serbia. However, while the overriding objective of both the democratic opposition parties and the IC was undoubtedly Milošević's removal from power, there were disagreements between the two as to the best means to achieve this goal, with the opposition parties remaining critical of some elements of international policy. Furthermore, other issues, most notably the plight of Kosovo's Serb minority and future co-operation with the ICTY, also strained relations between the democratic opposition and the IC.

In the time period covered by this case study, there was one significant challenge to the Milošević regime and that was the September 2000 election for the Yugoslav parliament and presidency (Serbian local elections were also held on the same day) in which an opposition coalition, DOS (Demokratska Opozicija Srbije – Democratic Opposition of Serbia), defeated Milošević's SPS in the parliamentary

elections, while DOS's presidential candidate defeated Milošević in the presidential elections.¹ Although Milošević was initially slow to acknowledge the opposition's victory, faced with a mass uprising, and with his regime crumbling, Milošević conceded defeat on 6 October 2000.

Given the changed priorities of international policy at this time and the explicit international support for the democratic opposition, this case study provides the opportunity to examine the extent to which the relationship between the democratic opposition parties and the IC changed in this significantly altered context, and also to consider whether this new situation enhanced or undermined the effectiveness of the democratic opposition parties' campaigns against the Milošević regime.

Key Issues for the International Community

The NATO bombing of Kosovo and the ICTY indictments against Milošević and four other key regime figures made Milošević an international outcast, and ensured that there could be no return to previous patterns of international engagement with him or his regime. As such, IC policy with respect to Serbia came to focus on the removal of Milošević. At this time the most significant international actors that were involved in dealing with Serbia were the EU and the US, and both openly expressed their desire to see Milošević ousted, making this an explicit condition for the normalisation of Serbia's international relations. In order to achieve its objectives, the IC adopted an approach of maintaining sanctions against Serbia, (though increasingly these came to be targeted at the regime directly, often in response to requests from the

¹ While in the immediate aftermath of the NATO bombing the SZP attempted to capitalise on a rise in popular discontent through organising mass demonstrations demanding Milošević's resignation, these were ultimately unsuccessful. Opposition disunity, with the SPO refusing to participate in the demonstrations or to support the demands for Milošević's resignation, contributed to this failure.

opposition), and at the same time offering assistance to democratic forces within Serbia. The extent of international support for the democratic opposition parties during this time period distinguishes it from previous time periods in which, although the IC may have expressed disapproval with Milošević and condemned his actions, no sustained or serious attempts were made to assist the opposition to bring an end to his rule.

The IC and the democratic opposition parties were essentially now prioritising the same ultimate objective – the removal of Milošević. However, this is not to imply that there was agreement between the democratic opposition parties and the IC in relation to how this objective should be achieved. On the contrary, the democratic opposition parties remained highly critical of elements of IC policy - most notably in relation to the maintenance of sanctions - and in spite of clear and unequivocal statements on the part of IC representatives that they wanted to see the end of Milošević, the democratic opposition parties, at times, continued to accuse the IC of strengthening rather than undermining the regime.² Furthermore, issues that were not directly related to the opposition's efforts to remove Milošević, most notably the plight of Kosovo's Serb minority following the withdrawal of Serbian and Yugoslav security forces from the province, and the issue of Serbia's future relations with the ICTY, led to some tension between the democratic opposition parties and the IC. While these issues may not have been directly related to efforts aimed at overthrowing Milošević, many within the democratic opposition nevertheless viewed international policy and actions in these areas as potentially damaging to their efforts against the regime.

² A report by the International Crisis Group from May 2000 suggests that there may also have been 'residual anxieties among the opposition that the West could revert to earlier Milošević-centred policies' (ICG, 2000: 2).

In spite of these tensions however, the IC continued to support the democratic opposition parties throughout the time period covered by this case study, and the level of international assistance increased dramatically following the announcement in July 2000 that Yugoslav elections were to be held in September. Evidence of IC support is clear not only in the statements of IC representatives and the provision of direct financial assistance, but also in the apparent willingness of the IC to listen to the views and suggestions of Serbia's opposition leaders, and also to act on those suggestions, in some cases altering policy to accommodate the opposition's requests. Clearly identifying the disunity of the opposition as a key stumbling block in earlier attempts to unseat the Milošević regime, the IC exerted significant pressure on the democratic opposition parties to unite and form a common front against the regime. By considering the two central elements of international policy at this time – the maintenance of sanctions and assistance to Serbia's democratic opposition forces – together with the tension between the democratic opposition and the IC in relation to Kosovo and the ICTY, it is possible to illustrate the extent to which the relationship between Serbia's democratic opposition parties and the IC had changed at this time.

Sanctions

A central element of IC policy with respect to Serbia throughout the entire time period covered by this study was the imposition of international sanctions, and this continued during the time period covered by this case study. Initially, the US took a far firmer line in relation to the maintenance of sanctions than did the EU, with Gelbard declaring that, as long as Milošević remained in power, Serbia would remain

isolated and not even reconstruction aid would be provided.³ While there were some differences of opinion regarding reconstruction aid to Serbia within the EU,⁴ in general EU leaders took a more flexible approach to the issue of sanctions, as illustrated by its decision in principle to recommend the partial lifting of certain sanctions, including the flight ban, and its emphasis on the need to support democratic forces in the SRJ, and in particular those municipalities that were under the control of the democratic opposition.⁵

The democratic opposition parties considered here all opposed the continuation of international sanctions against Serbia. Koštunica, maintaining his more anti-Western stance, was critical of the rationale for imposing sanctions, and also accused the US of being selective in its targets for sanctions, stating that the US attitude to Croatia illustrated that 'dictatorial regimes and authorities that have committed ethnic cleansing are not in any way distasteful to NATO'.⁶

The SPO and the SZP were also opposed to sanctions, emphasising, as in previous time periods, the damage that they were causing to Serbia's population and

³ Testimony of Robert Gelbard at the, Hearing of the European Affairs Subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on 'Prospects for Democracy in Yugoslavia', 29 July 1999. Available at: <http://www.globalresistance.com/analysis/hearin.htm>. Gelbard described US sanctions policy as containing 'three levels of sanctions, starting with the outer wall, the Kosovo-related sanctions started a year and a half ago, and then the wartime sanctions, including the fuel embargo, but also the visa ban, which has had a demonstrably negative effect on the members of the Milošević regime psychologically and in real terms, and, of course, The Hague Tribunal indictments.'

⁴ *The New York Times*, 21 June 1999.

⁵ *European Report*, 21 July 1999. Comments by Michael Steiner, an advisor to Gerhard Schroeder demonstrate the rationale for considering such moves. While acknowledging that there was a 'danger that some of this may seep to Belgrade,' Steiner argued that this 'should not stop us targeting the areas we want to help, and so illustrating that democracy pays' (*The New York Times*, 21 June 1999). Similar arguments were made by EU foreign affairs commissioner Hans van den Broek who suggested that some EU aid may be targeted at opposition controlled areas in Serbia: 'We shall not be able to conclude agreements with Milošević or his government but that does not mean we can do nothing for the Serbian population. The question is what you can do under the Milošević regime. I don't see why on an ad hoc basis one could not carry out specific projects with local or regional organisations which have proved to be pro-democracy.' (*The Guardian*, 24 June 1999). This idea had been proposed by Djindjić in 1999, and is set out in the *New York Times* article written jointly by Djindjić and Djukanović, 'After The War In Serbia is Over'.

⁶ Beta news agency, 18 June 1999 in *BBC Monitoring Europe – Political*, 19 June 1999.

also to the democratic opposition itself.⁷ Djindjić emphasised the suffering of Serbia's population and the dire need for an end to the sanctions.⁸ He also argued that continued international isolation would result in all Serbs seeing Europe as an enemy,⁹ and pointed out that if the opposition could have the sanctions lifted it would do much to increase their credibility in Serbia. Speaking at an OSCE summit in Istanbul in late 1999, Djindjić noted that: 'We must do our best to have sanctions lifted, so that people in Serbia can see that the international community accepts us as partners. This is the way of boosting the stature and credibility of the Serbian opposition in Serbia.'¹⁰

Djindjić proposed that if the IC was not prepared to lift the sanctions entirely, that it should provide targeted assistance to those towns in Serbia that were under opposition control.¹¹ To this end Djindjić proposed that while no money should reach Milošević, the IC should start 'immediately financing individual projects instead, namely projects where the opposition is in power: in Niš, in Čačak, in Novi Sad. There one can build bridges, for instance, so that people see that Serbia gets support only if it is governed democratically.'¹²

In line with its more flexible approach to the maintenance of sanctions against Serbia, the EU responded to Djindjić's proposals in late 1999 and began a programme

⁷ *La Repubblica* web site, 4 August 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3607/A, 7 August 1999; Agence France Presse, 16 October 1999.

⁸ Agence France Presse, 31 October 1999. Djindjić considered international economic assistance to Serbia to be of paramount importance, declaring that a 'change of regime without international assistance means nothing. Our economic collapse could not be halted even with the change of the regime, but only with 2 or 3 billion dollars' in assistance (Agence France Presse, 16 October 1999).

⁹ *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, 22 June 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3569/A, 24 June 1999. Following a meeting with the British foreign minister, Djindjić claims to have told Cook 'that his idea of continuing to isolate Serbia as long as Milošević remains in power is bad, because it is an idea which, taken to its logical conclusion, leads to civil war. Instead of that, I advised the British government to help the opposition municipalities, as well as the independent media, in order to open up the country rather than turn it in on itself' (*Le Figaro*, 6 July 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3581/A, 8 July 1999).

¹⁰ Beta news agency, 18 November 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3697/B, 20 November 1999.

¹¹ *The New York Times*, 20 June 1999.

¹² 'Profil', Vienna, 14 June 1999.

of providing heating oil to opposition controlled towns in Serbia known as Energy for Democracy. Opposition leaders were invited to attend a meeting of EU foreign ministers in Luxembourg on 11 October 1999 at which the EU intended to announce that fuel would be provided to two Serbian towns, Niš and Pirot, with the possibility of extending the scheme to other towns in the future.¹³ However, while opposition leaders initially accepted the EU's invitation, most, including Drašković and Djindjić (Koštunica had not been invited), decided to boycott the meeting at the last minute when they realised that the EU wanted them to sign a declaration that included a promise to extradite Milošević and other indictees to the ICTY should they come to power.¹⁴ In spite of the boycott, the EU went ahead with its plans to provide heating oil to the towns of Niš and Pirot.

The US was initially sceptical of the EU's Energy for Democracy initiative, with the State Department's James Rubin stating that while the US supported 'the principle of giving aid to the opposition,' there was concern 'about doing anything that would weaken the overall sanctions regime.'¹⁵ However, the US changed its position following talks between Albright and a group of SZP leaders in late 1999, when Albright announced that the US had agreed to evaluate the Energy for Democracy pilot programme to make sure that any assistance provided arrived at its intended target. Emphasising that US support for the project 'comes at the specific request of Serbia's democratic leaders,' Albright noted that it was the democratic opposition and not the regime 'who will deserve credit for each and every energy

¹³ The list of municipalities that would benefit from the Energy for Democracy programme was expanded to include Novi Sad, Kragujevac, Kraljevo, Sombor and Subotica in February 2000 (Agence France Presse, 15 February 2000).

¹⁴ Associated Press Worldstream, 10 October 1999

¹⁵ *The Washington Post*, 12 October 1999

delivery that is made.’¹⁶ Further concessions to the opposition were also made following this meeting when it was announced that the US would lift the fuel embargo and flight ban following the holding of free and fair elections in Serbia, a change from the previous position that the sanctions would remain in place until Milošević was removed from power. The willingness of the IC to alter its policies after consultations with the democratic opposition parties is in marked contrast to their actions in previous time periods when requests for concessions generally went unheeded. Further support for the opposition also included an explicit endorsement of its position that elections should be held in Serbia as soon as possible, under the conditions specified by the opposition, and Albright also stated that the US ‘enthusiastically endorses the call of Serbia’s democratic leaders for a Trilateral Working Group to promote change and to plan now for the reform and economic recovery of a democratic Yugoslavia.’¹⁷

The opposition also scored further success in its campaign to have the sanctions lifted when, in February 2000, the EU and the US announced that they would suspend the flight ban for six months. The move was accompanied by a decision to examine how sanctions targeted at the Milošević regime could be strengthened.¹⁸ While the EU had been more prepared to consider this type of move for some time, it marked a major shift in policy on the part of the US which had previously unequivocally rejected taking such a step. In October 1999, James Rubin had stated that the US ‘would strongly oppose measures to allow ... airline flights to

¹⁶ State Department Briefing, 3 November 1999. That credit for the Energy for Democracy programme was due to the Serbian opposition was also acknowledged by the EU’s Commissioner for External Relations, Chris Patten, who pointed out that: ‘One reason why we’ve gone ahead with the Energy for Democracy program is because [the opposition] advised us to do so, and our excellent officials ... have been responding to those requests from the democrats in Serbia.’ (CNN International Insight, Transcript # 120700cb.k01, 7 December 1999). In addition to its promotion by the SZP, G17 was heavily involved in the Energy for Democracy programme.

¹⁷ State Department Briefing, 3 November 1999.

¹⁸ Agence France Presse, 10 February 2000; *The Financial Times* (London), 15 February 2000.

resume between Belgrade and the Western world' as this would 'line the regime's pockets, that would only be for the rich who can afford aircraft and airline tickets.'¹⁹ The State Department credited the democratic opposition parties for the change of policy: 'in recognition of the steps that the opposition has taken to unify, to develop a joint program, to work on common lists for elections, ... we responded to their calls to have a suspension for several months of the ban on flights in and out of Yugoslavia to Europe.'²⁰

The decision to suspend the flight ban was welcomed by most of the democratic opposition parties, including the SPO and the DS, with Djindjić stating that the decision was 'a very important signal that shows that the democratic opposition in Serbia has obtained major international respect.'²¹ Again, however, Koštunica was more critical, stressing the damage that could be done from the tightening of other sanctions against certain Serbian companies, and also highlighting the potential damage to the opposition. According to Koštunica:

This will not only affect the directors of these companies, but also a great number of employees and a large part of society. The greatest problem lies in the fact that the Portuguese foreign minister, who is the EU Council of Ministers' chairman, literally said that 'the measures agreed upon will be discussed and arranged in agreement with the Serbian democratic opposition.'²²

Koštunica went on to allege that this was 'a disservice to the Serbian opposition' and stated that 'the Serbian opposition – without being asked – has been made to look like

¹⁹ US Department of State, Daily Press Briefing, 12 October 1999.

²⁰ US Department of State, Daily Press Briefing, 15 February 2000.

²¹ Agence France Presse, 10 February 2000.

²² Beta news agency, 14 February 2000 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3766/C, 17 February 2000.

a prison warden. This is not what the Serbian opposition wants, but the EU Council of Ministers has given it this role. This is something that should not be accepted at any price.’²³

In summary, the democratic opposition parties continued to object to the maintenance of sanctions against Serbia, again arguing, as in earlier time periods, that they were harming the Serbian population and the opposition itself. While the IC would not accede to the opposition’s request that sanctions be lifted in their entirety, IC actors were, nevertheless, prepared to lift some sanctions and also to provide assistance to those parts of Serbia that were under opposition control. This willingness on the part of the IC to respond positively to opposition suggestions in relation to the sanctions contrasts sharply with earlier unwillingness to make concessions to the opposition on this issue, and demonstrates clearly the extent to which the relationship between the democratic opposition parties and the IC had changed.

International support for the Serbian opposition

Following the end of the Kosovo bombing campaign, the IC made support for the democratic opposition and its efforts to bring about an end to Milošević’s rule a central element of its policy with respect to Serbia. In testimony to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Gelbard described support to ‘the forces of democratic change that exist within Serbian society’ as a ‘key aspect’ of US policy on Serbia,’ and went on to outline five categories in which the US government was assisting democratisation in Serbia: ensuring that the Milošević regime remains isolated; assistance to a wide variety of opposition groups including political parties,

²³ Beta news agency, 14 February 2000 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3766/C, 17 February 2000.

independent media, student groups and labour unions; consultation with European allies to ensure co-ordination of efforts; encouraging the engagement of other countries in the region; and support for Djukanović's government in Montenegro.²⁴ Democratic forces in Serbia also received support from the US Congress, which passed the Serbian Democratisation Act in July 1999 pledging \$100 million for democratisation, including the provision of training, equipment and technical assistance to the opposition parties, as well as the independent media.²⁵ Additionally, Clinton pledged a further \$10 million at the Stability Pact summit in Sarajevo in July 1999.²⁶

While the democratic opposition clearly sought international assistance at this time, events that followed a meeting between Gelbard and SZP leaders in June 1999 highlighted the potential damage that could stem from too close a relationship between the opposition and the West, when Serbia's state-controlled media used the meeting in its attempts to discredit the democratic opposition. A Radio Belgrade report, which described the opposition as 'the Serbian fifth column,' claimed that the purpose of Gelbard's meeting was to 'prepare for the violent overthrow of the authorities in Yugoslavia' and that to this end, the US would provide the opposition with \$9 million.²⁷ Djindjić clearly saw this type of anti-opposition propaganda as effective, stating that 'if the elections were to take place in an environment where a government news agency publishes that we got \$9 million from the Americans to topple Milošević ... you could imagine who would win.'²⁸

²⁴ Testimony of Robert Gelbard at the, Hearing of the European Affairs Subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on 'Prospects for Democracy in Yugoslavia', 29 July 1999. Available at: <http://www.globalresistance.com/analysis/hearin.htm>.

²⁵ *Christian Science Monitor*, 23 August 1999.

²⁶ United Press International, 30 July 1999.

²⁷ Radio Belgrade website, 16 June 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3564/A, 18 June 1999. These claims were denied by the US State Department (US Department of State, Daily Press Briefing, 23 June 1999).

²⁸ *The Scotsman*, 18 June 1999.

While aware that a close relationship with the IC could be damaging to the democratic opposition parties, Djindjić, nevertheless, clearly saw the need for international assistance, commenting in July 1999 that Milošević was most likely to be toppled by a combination of internal and external pressures.²⁹ He also indicated that potential damage could be offset by the IC, claiming that 'of course we have damage as pro-European, pro-Western politicians. ... And what we try is not only to have damage from our position ... but to have benefits from other support, economic support, and other support for the future of the country.'³⁰

In addition to US and EU support a further manifestation of international support for the democratic opposition was clear from the invitations that were issued to opposition leaders to attend international conferences and meetings, such as those of the Stability Pact and OSCE, as Serbia's informal representatives. Speaking at an OSCE summit in Istanbul in November 1999, which marked the first time that representatives from the SRJ had attended an OSCE summit since the country's expulsion in 1992,³¹ Djindjić remarked that:

We are aware of the fact that we are not an official delegation, that it is a huge success that we have been able to attend the summit at all, because this is a precedent that has not been made so far. Our task is to present our views and to hope that some of them will be accepted. My impression is that there is a disposition among European countries to accommodate our desires.³²

²⁹ *Sme*, Bratislava, 30 June 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3576/A, 2 July 1999

³⁰ The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer, Transcript #6581, 4 November 1999.

³¹ B92 news archive, 18 November 1999. Available at:

<http://www.b92.net/english/news/index.php?order=priority&dd=18&mm=11&yyyy=1999>.

³² Beta news agency, 18 November 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3697/A, 20 November 1999.

At the OSCE summit agreement was reached on setting up a trilateral commission involving the US, the EU and the Serbian democratic opposition and which would formalise relations between the Serbian opposition and the IC.³³

The first meeting of the Trilateral Commission took place in Berlin in mid-December 1999, and was attended by Albright, Javier Solana, Chris Patten, some EU foreign ministers and President Djukanović. In her address to the meeting on 17 December, Albright described the purpose of the meeting as being to discuss what could be done to help create a democratic future for Yugoslavia, and outlined what steps could be taken. Included in the list were the continuance of humanitarian aid to the most vulnerable sections of Serbia's population; the doubling of US democratisation assistance to Serbia; support for participation of opposition representatives in international events; and opposition unity.³⁴ Although the opposition did not succeed in persuading the EU and US to lift the sanctions, there was, nevertheless, general satisfaction with the meeting. Djindjić clearly considered that the meeting represented a new phase in the Serbian opposition's relationship with the IC, stating that: 'For the first time, their strategy has been one of support and development, rather than sanctions and threats.'³⁵

Not all democratic opposition parties were in favour of the Trilateral Commission. Koštunica, claimed that the meeting had not been useful for the Serbian opposition, pointing out that the opposition parties had been travelling to meetings with IC representatives with requests to have the sanctions lifted, but to date had had no success in this regard. Referring to relations with the IC in general, Koštunica

³³ Beta news agency, 18 November 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3697/A, 20 November 1999.

³⁴ Remarks by Albright at US-EU-Serbian Opposition Meeting, Berlin, 17 December 1999, Department of State Dispatch, December 1999.

³⁵ Radio B2-92, 17 December 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3722/A, 20 December 1999.

advocated some sort of middle ground between the approach of the regime, which he considered to be too uncooperative, and the approach of the opposition parties, which he considered to be too cooperative.³⁶

While the IC was clearly more willing to assist the opposition than had been the case in earlier time periods, there was also more international pressure exerted on the democratic opposition parties than had been the case in the past, particularly in relation to the need for the main parties and their leaders to unite. Both the US and the EU considered that opposition unity would be an important factor in the ability of the opposition to effectively oppose the Milošević's regime, and the US in particular applied pressure on the opposition parties to achieve this. The importance of opposition unity to the US was regularly noted by American officials, with Gelbard claiming that disunity was the biggest obstacle to opposition success and urging opposition leaders 'to overcome the politics of ego and to work together instead for the common good of Serbia and their people.'³⁷ At a US-EU-Serbian opposition meeting in Berlin in December 1999, Albright called for opposition unity in the strongest terms, stating that 'the international community is not interested in supporting one of you in preference to another; we want to help all of you against the forces of repression that have been dragging Serbia down and holding it back.'³⁸ Similar messages came from the EU with Patten advising the opposition to 'act and

³⁶ Beta news agency, 20 December 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3724/A, 22 December 1999.

³⁷ Testimony of Robert Gelbard at the, Hearing of the European Affairs Subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on 'Prospects for Democracy in Yugoslavia', 29 July 1999. Available at: <http://www.globalresistance.com/analysis/hearin.htm>.

³⁸ Remarks by Albright at US-EU-Serbian Opposition meeting, Berlin, 17 December 1999 in Department of State Dispatch, December 1999. Avramović claimed that the opposition had been given a two month deadline to achieve a platform for joint action at the Berlin meeting (Beta news agency, 119 December 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3723/A, 21 December 1999). This was denied by the SPO (Beta news agency, 20 December 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3724/A, 22 December 1999).

work as one'.³⁹ The extent of international pressure, and in particular US pressure, on the opposition parties in relation to this issue is clear in Djindjić's comment: 'The Americans kept on insisting that the opposition unite. It was virtually an ultimatum.'⁴⁰

Support for Serbia's democratic opposition parties was clearly a much higher international priority in this time period than it had been at any time in the past and this is clear not only from the increased financial assistance but also from the regular high level meetings between opposition leaders and IC representatives which were formalised in the Trilateral Commission. In the absence of formal contact with the Milošević regime, this also illustrates that, to a large extent, the democratic opposition was now coming to be regarded as Serbia's legitimate international representative, as Djindjić noted at the OSCE meeting in November 1999. While there was clearly danger for the opposition parties being seen to be too close to the Western powers that had recently bombed Yugoslavia, the SPO and the SZP calculated that this was a risk worth taking. Koštunica and the DSS, however, remained far more critical of the West, while its lack of involvement in any coalition with the larger opposition parties left the party somewhat marginalized internationally.

Kosovo

One issue that caused tension between the democratic opposition parties and the IC at this time was the plight of Kosovo's Serb minority following the withdrawal of Yugoslav troops from the province, and this was regularly on the agenda of the opposition parties in their meetings with IC representatives. All opposition parties were critical of the IC for not doing enough to protect the Kosovo Serbs, with some of

³⁹ CNN International Insight, Transcript # 120700cb.k01, 7 December 1999.

⁴⁰ The Fall of Milošević, episode 3. BBC documentary series broadcast 19 January 2003.

the most strident criticism coming from the DSS and the SPO. In addition, both the SZP and the SPO also raised the issue of the potential gains to Milošević if the IC did not do more to protect the Kosovo Serbs.

Drašković and Koštunica were highly critical of the IC's inability or unwillingness to prevent violent attacks against members of Kosovo's Serb population, with both leaders accusing the IC of being indifferent to what they described as genocide against the Kosovo Serbs.⁴¹ The GSS was also critical of the lack of protection afforded to Kosovo's Serb minority, with a party spokesperson alleging that the IC was 'soft on crimes committed against Serbs,' and that KFOR was not fulfilling its obligations under the Geneva conventions.⁴²

The DS and the SPO linked the situation in Kosovo to the efforts of the democratic opposition parties, pointing out that the situation in Kosovo could work to undermine their position in Serbia. Vuksanović argued that 'The crimes against Serbs actually help Milošević because he is using them to put all the blame on the international community and on the opposition parties ... He diverts public attention to Kosovo from problems at home.'⁴³ Similarly, Drašković commented that although Milošević was 'very weak' if NATO did not 'stop the murder of Serbs, the burnings, the sieges, the ethnic cleansing, it will guarantee his recovery.'⁴⁴ Drašković accused the EU and the US of being the 'most stubborn supporters of the present anti-

⁴¹ Agence France Presse, 20 July 1999; Bosnian Serb news agency, SRNA, 23 July 1999 in *BBC Monitoring Europe – Political*, 24 July 1999.

⁴² Associated Press Worldstream, 30 August 1999.

⁴³ Associated Press Worldstream, 31 August 1999. Vuksanović also commented on the damage that events in Kosovo were having on the prospects for democratisation in Serbia: 'It's a natural human reaction to worry about safety first and foremost. ... This will be the main theme in the news until the situation is solved. The situation in Kosovo is preventing the democratisation of Serbia.' (*Christian Science Monitor*, 15 September 1999). This point was also made by Nebojša Čović and the Democratic Alternative party. According to Čović, IC actions in Kosovo were counterproductive for both the democratic process and for the Serbian opposition (SRNA news agency, 22 September 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3648/A, 24 September 1999).

⁴⁴ *La Repubblica* web site, 4 August 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3607/A, 7 August 1999.

European regime in Serbia,' going on to state that 'Only the idiotic politicians from the EU and the United States could expect an explosion of pro-Western feelings in Serbia as long as such shameful atrocities and crimes against the Serbs in Kosovo are taking place.'⁴⁵ As such, the positions of the democratic opposition parties with respect to the situation in Kosovo reflect concern not just for plight of the Kosovo Serbs, but also for the ability of Milošević to use such a situation to undermine the opposition.

Co-operation with the ICTY

As noted above, most of Serbia's democratic opposition leaders decided to boycott a key meeting with the EU when it emerged that they would be asked to sign a declaration promising future co-operation with the ICTY if they were to come to power. EU leaders were quick to blame Milošević for the decision of the opposition leaders not to attend the meeting, with Robin Cook claiming that the decision was 'imposed on them by Milošević who told them they would be guilty of treason to come here.'⁴⁶ Djindjić, however, refuted this, asserting that Cook 'obviously does not know the situation in Serbia.'⁴⁷

In explaining why they refused to attend the Luxembourg meeting, the democratic opposition parties emphasised two main points: the first was that their priorities did not include future relations with the ICTY, while the second was to emphasise the potential damage that could be done to the opposition if it was to be seen as being too accommodating in relation to the Hague tribunal. Drašković's

⁴⁵ Mediafax news agency, 22 July 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3596/A, 26 July 1999. Drašković made similar claims at an SPO organised rally in Niš on 24 July (*The New York Times*, 24 July 1999).

⁴⁶ Associated Press Worldstream, 11 October 1999.

⁴⁷ Agence France Presse, 11 October 1999.

advisor noted that the objective of the opposition parties in terms of their planned trip to Luxembourg was to discuss 'the lifting of international sanctions, humanitarian aid and the EU's support to opposition forces in Serbia, but not to be someone who would confirm something that had been agreed upon without our knowledge.'⁴⁸ Djindjić emphasised that the problem was not that the democratic opposition would not co-operate with the ICTY, declaring that:

of course we are prepared to cooperate fully with the Hague Tribunal, because we want to be a UN member, and the Security Council is a UN body. ... But in our view, this is not the topic for talks with the EU. ... What we want to discuss is, naturally, money, economy and problems of the people of Serbia who are fighting for their rights in the streets. ... If the EU helps us to solve economic problems, we shall be in a much better position to give our people hope and strengthen their desire for change.⁴⁹

In addition to the fact that the ICTY was not a priority issue for the democratic opposition parties at this time, Vuksanović noted the potential damage to the opposition from signing such a declaration, and highlighted the EU's lack of understanding of the situation inside Serbia. Vuksanović declared that 'This is a very sensitive subject. If we are involved with the Hague tribunal, we will be destroyed by Milošević propaganda.'⁵⁰ He went on to state that:

⁴⁸ United Press International, 11 October 1999. Simić also described the Luxembourg meeting as 'a wonderful opportunity for the EU to show its support for the democratic opposition, but it was wasted' (*The Scotsman*, 12 October 1999).

⁴⁹ Radio B2-92, 11 October 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3664/A, 13 October 1999. Further comments from the DS included Živković's remarks that: 'It is unacceptable that in this document we are obliged to sign, the EU does not promise anything but demands from us that we make promises once we come to power', while Djindjić noted that 'There is nothing wrong with the principles but co-operation with the War Crimes Tribunal is not a priority at the moment. Our main priority is the coming winter and the possible humanitarian catastrophe'. Batić also emphasised the fact that the opposition's priority at this time was the need for aid for Serbia's population and not the ICTY (B92 news archive, October 11 1999. Available at: <http://www.b92.net/english/news/index.php?dd=11&mm=10&yyyy=1999>).

⁵⁰ *The Scotsman*, 12 October 1999.

Milošević deserves everything he gets, and we have respect for the UN and the institutions of the UN – the tribunal included. But the first thing is to stay alive politically. We can only win if we can get enough people out on to the streets every night, and the EU gave us no choice: we cannot have anything to do with this.⁵¹

That the refusal of the democratic opposition parties to sign the EU declaration did not lead to a serious breach in relations between them and the IC is significant. Cooperation with the ICTY was an obligation for Serbia according to the terms of the Dayton agreement and, as such, had been a source of tension between the IC and Milošević for much of the late 1990s. While the opposition parties attempted to reassure the IC that they would cooperate with the Hague tribunal if they came to power, their refusal to sign the EU declaration suggests a degree of ambivalence in their attitudes to the court, even if only through fear of the impact this might have domestically. That this did not become a sticking point in relations between the democratic opposition parties and the IC illustrates the extent to which IC priorities had changed, with the desire to assist opposition parties in their efforts to oust Milošević now clearly the overriding objective of IC policy.

Ilić notes that, while there is a relative scarcity of material relating to the opposition's attitudes to co-operation with the ICTY, in the period before the 2000 elections, on the whole, the DS, the SPO and the GSS accepted that co-operation would be necessary if they gained power (Ilić, 2001: 8-12). However, Koštunica was a consistent critic of the ICTY describing the tribunal as 'unjust,'⁵² its indictment of Milošević as an 'unnecessary decision'⁵³ and claiming that the tribunal had 'pressed

⁵¹ *The Scotsman*, 12 October 1999.

⁵² Beta news agency, 15 May 2000, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3842/C, 17 May 2000

⁵³ FoNet news agency, 23 August 2000, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3928/C, 25 August 2000.

unreasonable charges against [Milošević].'⁵⁴ Koštunica's disdain for the ICTY is clear in the remarks that he made following the arrest of former speaker of the Republika Srpska parliament Momčilo Krajišnik in April 2000: 'It is clear that the Hague tribunal is not a legal, judiciary or international institution. It is a NATO, that is, a US weapon of pressure and imposition of its own will in the world in accordance with its own current interests.'⁵⁵ Furthermore, when questioned directly about whether Milošević would be handed over the Hague when the new government took power, Koštunica stated that 'The first government will have no time to concern itself with the Hague tribunal. This is not our priority.'⁵⁶

The IC was directly confronted with Koštunica's negative opinion of the ICTY in the period between his winning the presidential election and his taking power. Speaking at the beginning of October, Koštunica chastised the US for 'missing no opportunity to mention the Hague indictment as if that was more important than the fate of a nation.'⁵⁷ Koštunica explained that he was criticising US statements because:

as a rule these statements mention the Hague Tribunal's accusations against Slobodan Milošević. I am one of those who thinks the accusation is unjust in legal terms. I think it is foolish and legally incorrect. It helps maintain tension and to a certain extent had made us hostage to Milošević's authoritarian regime. I am opposed to this accusation and when the Americans mention it ... it makes our position more difficult.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ SRNA news agency, Bijeljina, 9 August 2000, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3916/C, 11 August 2000.

⁵⁵ Beta news agency, 3 April 2000 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3807/C, 5 April 2000

⁵⁶ *Focus*, Munich, 21 August 2000 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3928/C, 25 August 2000.

⁵⁷ FoNet News Agency, 2 October 2000, *BBC Monitoring Europe – Political*, 2 October 2000.

⁵⁸ Russian Public TV, 4 October 2000 in *BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union – Political*, 4 October 2000.

When questioned about Koštunica's comments, US officials refrained from any criticism of Koštunica, and reiterated their support for efforts to ensure that his electoral victory was respected.⁵⁹ When asked whether she believed Koštunica would be co-operative with the West if he were Yugoslav president, Albright responded:

I think that the issue here is that Mr. Koštunica is very clearly a Serb nationalist. One can recognise that one can be a nationalist and not be an ethnic cleanser. I think that he is obviously entitled to believe in a strong Yugoslavia. He has never been a communist. He's someone who has made very clear that he believes in the rule of law. Those are values that are important to the US and to the European community.⁶⁰

At this time, it is clear that IC representatives were being careful not to make threats or statements that might undermine the opposition, a point that was made explicitly by French foreign minister Vedrine who stated that it was 'very important that we do not strike a tone of threats but rather encouragement, saying that if democracy wins the elections, then the Yugoslav democrats will be able to move closer to Europe and so on.'⁶¹

In considering international policy with respect to Serbia at this time it is clear that the extent and nature of international support for Serbia's democratic opposition parties was significantly different from any support that had been offered to the opposition in previous time periods. Unlike before, the IC openly called for Milošević's removal from power and assistance to the democratic opposition in an

⁵⁹ US Department of State, Daily Press Briefing, 3 October 2000; The White House, Press Briefing, 3 October 2000.

⁶⁰ FDCH Political Transcripts, Madeleine K. Albright holds joint news conference with French foreign minister Hubert Vedrine, Paris, 2 October 2000.

⁶¹ FDCH Political Transcripts, Madeleine K. Albright holds joint news conference with French foreign minister Hubert Vedrine, Paris, 2 October 2000. Javier Solana made a similar point at the same press conference, stating that 'it is important to refrain from doing anything now that would provide arguments that Mr. Milošević could use to strengthen his rear guard manoeuvres which he may be indulging in.'

effort to secure regime change became the central element of international policy with respect to Serbia. Support to the democratic opposition went beyond merely increasing financial support and issuing statements in support of its campaigns, however. The IC also showed its support for democratic forces by regularly meeting with opposition leaders, listening to their suggestions and, on occasion, changing policy in line with these suggestions. That sensitive and contentious issues such as the plight of Kosovo's Serb minority and, in particular, future co-operation with the Hague tribunal did not become major issues in the relationship between the democratic opposition parties and the IC is significant; opposition positions that may have undermined their credibility as an alternative to the Milošević regime internationally in earlier time periods did not have any significant negative impact on IC support for the opposition. This demonstrates that whether or not the democratic opposition parties held views that were at odds with those of the IC was less important to the IC than whether or not they could effectively oppose the regime domestically, and also suggests that international actors may have been more aware of the potential damage that some of their policies could do to the democratic opposition parties. The IC also sought to actively build opposition unity through exerting pressure on the democratic opposition parties, something that was not done previously.

Challenges to the Milošević regime

The September 2000 Elections

In the immediate aftermath of the NATO bombing, the democratic opposition in Serbia was again in disarray. The SZP had been unable to operate as a result of the

bombing and Djindjić had relocated to Montenegro fearing for his personal safety. The SPO had been discredited as an opposition party as a result of its decision to enter the federal government in January 1999, and, although Drašković was expelled a few months later, other opposition actors now viewed him with some suspicion. Koštunica and the DSS had remained aloof from opposition coalitions since its short-lived co-operation with Zajedno, and as such was somewhat marginalized at this time as the opposition scene was dominated by the larger SPO and SZP. The SZP had organised protests in an effort to capitalise on the rise in popular discontent in the aftermath of the NATO bombing, but, while initially well attended, the demonstrations were called off in December as attendance declined.

Divisions between the SPO and the SZP at this time regarding the appropriate strategy and tactics to unseat the regime precluded the creation of a united opposition front for much of the second half of 1999. While the SZP was demanding Milošević's resignation, the SPO argued that change would be best effected through negotiations with the regime. Furthermore, while the SZP believed that Milošević could be toppled through street demonstrations, this was not a tactic favoured by Drašković at this time.

However, by the end of 1999, with neither strategy showing any signs that it might succeed, changes in the positions of the SPO and the SZP appeared to bring the two parties closer together. In mid-October Djindjić had announced that the SZP's protests would now be 'focused on demanding early elections.'⁶² This brought his position closer to that of Drašković who had begun to argue that the time had passed when it would be possible to negotiate with the authorities for a transitional government. Instead, the SPO's position was now that public 'attention and pressure

⁶² Agence France Presse, 15 October 1999.

should be focused on early elections and getting the best conditions for these elections.’⁶³ While there was considerable division within the democratic opposition during much of 1999, there were also signs towards the end of the year that the opposition parties may be drawing closer together, when as the result of an initiative by former DS leader Dragoljub Mićunović, two opposition agreements were signed, both of which related to opposition strategy for future elections.⁶⁴

Drašković was behind the next initiative to unite the opposition parties and in late December the SPO issued an invitation to the leaders of the main opposition parties to talks. Those invited included Djindjić, Svilanović, Koštunica, Vladan Batić, and Mićunović, and the leaders of regionally based parties and coalitions from Vojvodina, Sandžak, and Kosovo.⁶⁵ Of the 16 party leaders that were invited to the meeting, only Djindjić and Svilanović did not attend, on the grounds that an agreement had been reached within the SZP that it would be represented by its coordinator, Batić.⁶⁶

The 10 January meeting resulted in the opposition parties signing two documents. The first was an agreement on a joint opposition strategy to secure

⁶³ Agence France Presse, 19 August 1999. At the time SZP members had objected to Drašković’s call to force early elections, with Djindjić arguing that any elections with Milošević remaining in power would be manipulated (Agence France Presse, 26 August 1999). The GSS and Mladjan Dinkić also raised objections (Beta news agency, 26 August 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3625/A, 28 August 1999; Beta news agency, 24 August 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D/3623/A, 26 August 1999).

⁶⁴ The first was signed on 14 October, by all of the major opposition parties who agreed to a set of conditions for fair elections which they intended to present at a roundtable of the opposition and the authorities (Beta news agency, 14 October 1999 in *BBC Monitoring Europe – Political*, 15 October 1999). The second was signed on 28 October and was ‘Principles of cooperation between the democratic opposition,’ and specified that the parties would continue to cooperate in negotiations regarding election conditions, as well as throughout the election campaign and in the post-election period, and included a provision that the signatories would not cooperate with, support or enter into a coalition with any of the parties then in power. The SPO did not sign this agreement (Beta news agency, 28 October 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3679/A, 30 October 1999).

⁶⁵ Beta news agency, 28 December 1999 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3727/A, 30 December 1999.

⁶⁶ Radio B2-92, 10 January 2000 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3734/C, 11 January 2000.

democratic conditions for the holding of early elections.⁶⁷ The parties also signed a second document which called on the EU and the US to lift or suspend all sanctions as soon as the opposition and the authorities signed an agreement on early elections, to renew Yugoslavia's membership of the OSCE, and to allow for the Yugoslav army and Serbian police to return to Kosovo, in line with existing agreements.⁶⁸

The opposition agreement was welcomed by the IC, with a spokesperson for the EU's foreign affairs commissioner stating that 'It is a priority for the European Union that the Serbian opposition forces unite in their struggle for democracy and freedom. These developments are to be welcomed.'⁶⁹ In addition, a meeting of the EU's General Affairs Council on 24 January also welcomed the agreement, and endorsed the opposition's call for elections in early 2000.⁷⁰ Similarly, the US State Department issued a press statement welcoming both the agreement and the parties' 'united call for early elections, an end to state terror, and the abolition of repressive legislation.'⁷¹

The democratic opposition parties believed that the 10 January agreement would strengthen their position with the IC. Following a Trilateral Commission meeting in Budva on 19 January, Djindjić expressed a certain degree of optimism on the issue of sanctions, noting that the 10 January agreement was having a positive impact on the opposition's relations with the IC: 'I think the situation in Serbia is seen

⁶⁷ Studio B TV, 10 January 2000 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3735/C, 12 January 2000. The parties' demands included that democratic elections be held before the end of April, and that anti-democratic laws such as the law on information and the law on universities be abolished. In addition, the parties pledged to do everything possible to present the strategy of the joint opposition, and to increase the hope of victory to the people of Serbia. The parties also agreed to hold a rally of support for their demands in March, and to abide by all past agreements on non-cooperation with the regime, and the minimum acceptable election conditions.

⁶⁸ Studio B TV, 10 January 2000 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3735/C, 12 January 2000.

⁶⁹ Agence France Presse, 11 January 2000.

⁷⁰ 2239th Council Meeting – General Affairs – Brussels – 24 January 2000.

⁷¹ US Department of State, Press Statement, 'Serbian Opposition Calls for Early Elections,' January 11 2000.

much more optimistically today than before our meeting, and they have said that the holding of that meeting and the behaviour of the opposition since then is one of the reasons which could change their stance.'⁷² Portuguese diplomat Antonio Tanger Correa, who chaired the meeting of the Trilateral Commission, confirmed the more favourable disposition of the IC towards the Serbian opposition following the 10 January agreement, declaring that: 'It is much easier for us to help a united opposition than a fractured opposition. ... The fact that the opposition is united ... in relation to the lifting of the sanctions confronts us with a different situation.'⁷³ Furthermore, in their stated reasons for supporting a suspension of the flight ban, both Albright and Cook noted that the efforts of the democratic opposition parties to unite had been a factor in their decision.⁷⁴ As such, the democratic opposition parties were, to a certain extent, now being 'rewarded' by the IC for making efforts to unify.

In the months following the 10 January agreement the main democratic opposition parties held regular meetings to discuss cooperation and strategy, and in early March agreed a joint political platform, known as 'Platform of the Democratic Opposition of Serbia.'⁷⁵ On 22 March the parties, after a series of delays and disagreements, agreed the date for their planned joint rally in Belgrade, which took place on 14 April (the original intention had been to hold the rally in March), under the title 'Stop the Terror For Free Elections.'⁷⁶ Between 100,000 and 200,000 turned

⁷² Radio Montenegro, 19 January 2000 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3743/C, 21 January 2000.

⁷³ Agence France Presse, 20 January 2000. An EU foreign ministers meeting held the following week did not agree to any sanctions relief for Serbia, with UK and the Netherlands arguing against such a move. It was decided, however, to hold further discussions on the issue at future meetings (Beta news agency, 25 January 2000 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3748/C, 27 January 2000). The SZP decided to send an expert team, headed by Avramović, to Britain and the Netherlands to make their case for lifting the flight ban and oil embargo (Agence France Presse, 28 January 2000).

⁷⁴ Federal News Service, Press Availability with Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook, The State Department, Washington, 9 February 2000.

⁷⁵ Radio B2-92, 3 March 2000 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3780/C, 4 March 2000. The DOS Platform is reprinted in Milošević, 2000: 99. 190-192.

⁷⁶ Associated Press Worldstream, 22 March 2000.

up for the demonstration, which included representatives from the main democratic opposition parties and coalitions, together with representatives from Otpor⁷⁷ and the Association of Independent Journalists.⁷⁸

As has already been noted, the democratic opposition parties came under a significant degree of international pressure to unite and form a common front against the Milošević regime. However, demands for unity also came from domestic actors, in particular from highly popular NGOs such as G17 plus⁷⁹ and Otpor.⁸⁰ At the 14 April rally Otpor warned the opposition parties that it would launch demonstrations against any party that breached opposition unity or co-operated with the Milošević regime (Anastasijević, 2000: 157). The influence of Otpor on the democratic opposition parties should not be underestimated. As Bieber points out, 'The unification of the opposition, first in January 2000 and later in the form of [DOS], was largely the result of intensive pressure by Otpor'⁸¹ (Bieber, 2003: 86). While it is difficult to assess the relative influence of external and internal sources of pressure on the democratic opposition parties to unite at this time, it seems clear that both were influential.

While internal and external pressure may have played a role in forcing the democratic opposition parties to work more closely together, even this was not sufficient to overcome divisions between the parties, as became clear in the run up to

⁷⁷ Otpor (Resistance) was a student organisation that was founded in Belgrade in 1998 and which would play a significant role in the overthrow of the Milošević regime in 2000.

⁷⁸ Radio B2-92, 4 April 2000 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3808/C, 6 April 2000.

⁷⁹ G17/G17 plus was a highly respected group of independent economists who did much to highlight the catastrophic economic consequences of Milošević policies and played an important role in drawing up the DOS platform for the September 2000 elections.

⁸⁰ It was not only non-party groups that were growing impatient with the party leaders, as key figures within the democratic opposition parties also criticised the leadership on these grounds. This was particularly the case with respect to those local party leaders who had been in power since the Zajedno local election victories in 1996/1997 (Beta news agency, 28 October 1999 in *BBC Monitoring Europe – Political*, 29 October 1999; 'Serbia's Brave New Protesters', *Balkan Crisis Report*, Institute for War and Peace Reporting, 11 July 1999).

⁸¹ Bieber also claims that Otpor 'put an end to most instances of cooperation with the regime and refocused the opposition on toppling Slobodan Milošević' (Bieber, 2003: 81).

the September elections. Cohen claims that the appearance of the united opposition parties at 14 April rally was a 'show of solidarity' that was 'maintained mainly for the crowds and opposition supporters abroad' (Cohen, 2001: 359), while Bieber asserts that even DOS 'divided by many programmatic issues and personal animosities – was united solely by its rejection of any cooperation with the regime' (Bieber, 2003: 79).

In summary, under pressure from both domestic and international actors, Serbia's democratic opposition parties made efforts to overcome their differences and act together against the regime. Considerable progress in this direction was made in late 1999 and early 2000, culminating in the 10 January agreement which was welcomed by the IC as a positive step. However, differences between the parties persisted and maintaining a united front was clearly difficult, particularly for the SPO. The fragility of the unity between the SPO and the other democratic opposition parties was evident even in early 2000, foreshadowing the breakdown of this wide opposition unity in advance of the September elections.

The September 2000 federal elections

By law, elections for the federal parliament's Chamber of Citizens and Serbian local elections were scheduled to take place in 2000, though Milošević's term as Yugoslav president was not due to expire until July 2001. Against a background of increasing repression, further groundwork for the election was laid when Milošević introduced changes to the electoral laws, and amended the Yugoslav constitution in moves designed to ensure that he would remain in power. In July, Milošević succeeded in getting constitutional amendments passed in the Federal parliament that

clearly indicated his intention to maintain power in the SRJ.⁸² The constitutional changes introduced direct elections for the Yugoslav president, who could now stay in office for two terms, and also for the Chamber of Republics. Until this time the representatives in the Chamber of Republics had been appointed by the republican parliaments. These changes clearly weakened Montenegro's position in the Yugoslav federation, and Montenegro's ruling parties decided to boycott the subsequent elections (Goati, 2001: 233-235).

Until the constitutional changes were introduced, the SRJ president was elected by the Yugoslav parliament and could stand for only one four year term and as such, Milošević's term in office was due to expire in July 2001. Clearly Milošević intended to maintain power by running in direct elections under the new arrangements. In addition to changes to the Yugoslav constitution, Milošević also prepared for the forthcoming elections by passing new electoral laws in the federal parliament. The changes included a redrawing of electoral boundaries to favour the ruling parties and changes to the composition of the Federal Electoral Commission such that the majority of its members were elected by the Federal parliament (in effect the Milošević regime) (Goati, 2001: 235-237). On 27 July, Milošević announced that there would be Yugoslav legislative and presidential elections held on 24 September 2000, with Serbian local elections also taking place on the same day.

Drašković's immediate reaction to the announcement that the elections would be held in September was to declare that the SPO would boycott them.⁸³ However, the

⁸² In April Milošević had prepared the ground for this move to change the Federal Constitution when the Serbian parliament approved changes to the law regarding how representatives were to be chosen for the Federal Chamber of the Republics, ensuring that Milošević would have the two thirds majority in the federal parliament needed to amend the constitution. The move was described by an opposition politician as 'an internal coup in the Serbian Assembly' (Ramet, 2002: 355).

⁸³ United Press International, 28 July 2000. Drašković stated that: 'As ours is a two-member federation, if one member is not participating in such elections they cease to be federal polls and become a dangerous provocation for breaking up the federal state and the SPO will not be a party to it.'

other main opposition parties, who had signed an agreement on 2 June that they would participate in forthcoming elections, and would present a joint list of candidates,⁸⁴ announced that they would be taking part and that they would put forward a joint DOS candidate to oppose Milošević in the elections for the SRJ presidency.⁸⁵

The IC reaction to the announcement of the elections was to support the opposition's decision to contest the elections, and the US called on the SPO and Montenegro to participate.⁸⁶ While the Montenegrin government refused to end its boycott, the SPO decided that it would participate, though not as part of DOS, and in early August the party announced that Belgrade mayor, Vojislav Mihailović, grandson of wartime nationalist leader Draža Mihailović, would be the SPO's candidate for the federal presidency.⁸⁷ On 7 August, DOS announced that Koštunica would be its presidential candidate.⁸⁸

Following the announcement that elections were to be held in September 2000, the IC greatly increased the level of support it was providing to Serbia's democratic opposition parties. In mid-August, the US decided to open an office in its Budapest embassy to support democratic forces in Serbia. The US and the EU provided considerable financial support to the DOS coalition and also to non-party groups, most notably Otpor. According to Carothers, the international support for Serbia's democrats was intended to achieve four objectives: to increase the credibility of the elections through providing a parallel vote count and domestic election observers; to strengthen the democratic opposition parties; to increase the belief in Serbia's population that political change was both desirable and possible; and to

⁸⁴ Agence France Presse, 2 June 1999.

⁸⁵ Agence France Presse, 29 July 2000.

⁸⁶ *The New York Times*, 31 July 2000.

⁸⁷ Radio B2-92, 6 August 2000.

⁸⁸ United Press International, 7 August 2000.

support a massive campaign to increase voter turnout (Carothers, 2001: 2). In terms of the scale of the financial assistance that was offered to the democratic opposition, Carothers estimates that approximately \$40 million was provided by US government and private sources, and close to the same amount from Europe (Carothers, 2001: 3). International financial assistance paid for polls of Serbian public opinion to help the opposition formulate an effective strategy; 2.5 million stickers for Otpor which was at the forefront of the get-out-the vote campaign; 20,000 elections monitors; and communications and other equipment for the DOS campaign headquarters.⁸⁹ According to Djindjić, 'Satellite phones and computers were vital to us. We were given our entire communication network.'⁹⁰

In addition to providing financial and technical assistance to the democratic opposition, in mid-September the EU promised that sanctions against Serbia would be lifted if the opposition won the elections. In an appeal to Serbian voters, EU foreign ministers issued a statement in which it promised that 'A choice, leading to democratic change, would lead to a radical modification of the European Union's policy towards Serbia: we will lift the sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.'⁹¹ This move was welcomed by Koštunica, who stated that 'This is a telling proof that European policy towards Yugoslavia has changed for the better. It would be even more useful for democracy in Serbia if the lifting of sanctions were unconditional, but this gesture of goodwill means a lot to the Serbs.'⁹²

While the IC supported the democratic opposition in the September elections – in effect Koštunica and the DOS coalition - Koštunica stated that he wanted neither verbal nor financial support from the US, which he believed was jointly responsible,

⁸⁹ The Fall Of Milošević, episode 3, BBC documentary series broadcast on 19 January 2003.

⁹⁰ The Fall Of Milošević, episode 3, BBC documentary series broadcast on 19 January 2003.

⁹¹ *The Scotsman*, 19 September 2000.

⁹² SRNA news agency, 18 September 2000 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3950/C, 20 September 2000.

with Milošević, for the hardships that the Serbian population had suffered.⁹³ He reacted angrily to the decision of the US to open the Budapest office, describing it as the 'crudest interference in the internal affairs' of Serbia and Yugoslavia, and an example of the 'hegemonistic and colonial pretensions of the current US administration.'⁹⁴ Expressing great concern regarding the potential negative impact such assistance might have, Koštunica declared that 'The American decision is a true kiss of death to all truly democratic and patriotic forces in our country and an encouragement to the non-national, corrupt and irresponsible policies' of the Milošević regime.⁹⁵ Koštunica also stated that 'You have to have a huge dose of arrogance, but hypocrisy as well, in order to claim that a long-term US goal is the improvement of democracy in Serbia. Democracy in Serbia is exclusively a Serbian goal and nobody else can claim it.'⁹⁶

The State Department reacted with considerable tolerance to Koštunica's anti-American views, with a spokesperson stating that:

I think that it's obvious we don't share Mr. Koštunica's views regarding US interest in a democratic Serbia, nor do those democratic forces who do want to talk to us. It's not ... our position to endorse one particular candidate. We believe that Mr. Koštunica is indeed a genuine democratic leader, and he is entitled to his opinions.⁹⁷

Koštunica reacted more favourably to a statement by Albright which urged Serbia's citizens to vote in the forthcoming elections. Although he did question the right of the US administration to call on Serbs to vote in their own elections,

⁹³ Radio B2-92, 13 August 2000 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3919/C, 15 August 2000.

⁹⁴ Radio B2-92 web site, 16 August 2000 in *BBC Monitoring Europe – Political*, 16 August 2000.

⁹⁵ Associated Press Worldstream, 16 August 2000.

⁹⁶ Radio B2-92 web site, 16 August 2000 in *BBC Monitoring Europe – Political*, 16 August 2000.

⁹⁷ US Department of State, Daily Press Briefing, 18 August 2000.

Koštunica nevertheless stated that Albright's statement 'represents in a way a positive shift in the hitherto US policy towards events' in the SRJ and should therefore 'be taken as a good sign.'⁹⁸ What made this statement more acceptable from Koštunica's point of view was that: 'There are no threats in this statement, there are no promises or anything else that might offend the dignity of our people and be misused by Slobodan Milošević's regime against his opponents.'⁹⁹ Koštunica expressed the hope that 'all pre-election comments and statements from Washington will remain within this framework.'¹⁰⁰

The DOS coalition topped the polls in the September 2000 federal elections for both houses of the federal parliament and also in the crucial presidential election (see Table 4). DOS won approximately 44% in the elections for both houses of the federal parliament, an increase of more than 20% on Zajedno's total in the 1996 federal elections. While the SPS-JUL vote was more than 20% less than the SPS-JUL-ND coalition had obtained in the 1996 elections, it was not significantly smaller than the percentage of 34.2% won in the 1997 Serbian elections. A far more significant loss was that experienced by the SPO which, although it had for most of the 1990s been Serbia's largest individual opposition party, received only around 5% in both parliamentary elections, a massive drop from the 19.1% that it had won when it contested the Serbian elections in 1997, which secured the party only one seat in the Chamber of Republics and none in the Chamber of Citizens. As such, Goati has noted that the party's decision to remain independent of DOS was a major mistake on the part of the SPO, which, as a consequence, 'was "self-eliminated" ... from the main

⁹⁸ Beta news agency, 24 August 2000 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3929/C, 26 August 2000.

⁹⁹ Beta news agency, 24 August 2000 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3929/C, 26 August 2000.

¹⁰⁰ Beta news agency, 24 August 2000 in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* EE/D3929/C, 26 August 2000.

party scene’(Goati, 2001a: 233). In addition, the turnout for the election was 74.4%, a huge increase on the 57.4% that had voted in the 1997 election, and the highest turnout in any elections that had been held in Serbia since the introduction of multiparty elections in 1990 (Goati, 2001b: 54).

	Presidency	Chamber of Citizens		Chamber of Republics	
	Votes (%)	Votes (%)	Seats	Votes (%)	Seats
DOS	50.24%	44.6%	59 (54.6%)	43.9%	10 (50%)
SPS-JUL	37.15%	33.5%	44 (40.7%)	31%	7 (35%)
SRS	5.88%	8.8%	4 (3.7%)	9.9%	2 (10%)
SPO	2.95%	5%	0	5.9%	1 (5%)

Table 4: Results of the 2000 Yugoslav elections. (Figures from Goati, 2001a, p.247)

The presidential election was even more successful for DOS, with Koštunica obtaining more than 50% of the first round votes, meaning that he had won the election outright. However, Milošević was not prepared to recognise the result of the presidential election, and, on 28 September, four days after the vote had taken place, the Federal Electoral Commission (SIK) announced that while Koštunica had received the largest amount of votes of all the candidates in the election, he had secured only 48.96% of the total votes and as such a second round of voting would be held on 8 October.¹⁰¹ This left Koštunica and DOS with the option of disputing the SIK’s

¹⁰¹ Agence France Presse, 28 September 2000.

results, or accepting them and taking part in a second round of voting. Koštunica chose the latter.

DOS's claim that Koštunica had beaten Milošević in the first round of the presidential elections was endorsed by most IC actors, including the US, the EU and the OSCE.¹⁰² In addition, the EU announced that it was preparing to lift its sanctions against Serbia as soon as Milošević was removed from office,¹⁰³ while Clinton declared that 'If the will of the people is respected' that the US would 'take steps with our allies to lift economic sanctions.'¹⁰⁴ However, Milošević refused to concede defeat and on 4 October Yugoslavia's Constitutional Court issued a rather vague ruling that part of the 24 September presidential election had been annulled. The following morning the court announced that the results of the presidential elections were invalid, and a re-run of the election was unnecessary until Milošević's term of office expired in July 2001 (de Krnjević-Mišković, 2001: 105).

The Constitutional Court's announcement came the morning of a planned opposition demonstration in Belgrade which was to be attended by opposition supporters and activists from all over Serbia. Approximately 700,000 demonstrators converged on Belgrade on 5 October and, in operations planned by opposition leaders, anti-Milošević activists took control of key regime institutions such as the Federal parliament building, police stations and the state-controlled media.¹⁰⁵ According to Djindjić, the seizure of key regime buildings had been planned by the DOS leaders

¹⁰² Agence France Presse, 27 September 2000. de Krnjević-Mišković states that the decision not to participate in the second round was taken against western advice (de Krnjević-Mišković, 2001: 104). However, once this decision was taken the IC stood behind DOS and called for Koštunica's victory to be recognised.

¹⁰³ Agence France Presse, 28 September 2000. France had argued that the sanctions should have been lifted immediately as the opposition had already won the election.

¹⁰⁴ *Christian Science Monitor*, 28 September 2000.

¹⁰⁵ A full account of the events of 5 October can be found in *The Fall of Milošević: The October 5th Revolution* by Dragan Bujošević and Ivan Radovanović.

because they knew that a 'mass demonstration alone would not get him out. We had to seize his institutions.'¹⁰⁶

With the opposition having taken over the federal parliament building and other regime buildings and institutions, including the state-controlled media, the following day the Constitutional Court reversed its earlier ruling and declared that Koštunica had won the presidential election in the first round, and as such was rightfully Yugoslavia's president. Following a meeting with Koštunica on 6 October Milošević conceded defeat, stating that he accepted the court's ruling, bringing his thirteen-year reign to an end.

Explaining the DOS victory

A variety of factors, internal and external, contributed to the fall of the Milošević regime, and as Cevallos rightly points out 'it is in the end impossible to credit any single individual or organization with the downfall of Milošević' (Cevallos, 2001: 10). It is not the purpose of this research to determine the relative contribution of various groups and factors to the events that culminated in the end of Milošević's rule in October 2000. Rather, what is being considered here is the manner in which international policy either enhanced or undermined the effectiveness of the democratic opposition parties in their campaigns against the Milošević regime.

In analyses of the reasons for DOS's victory in the September 2000 elections, and the subsequent collapse of the Milošević regime, commentators note the importance of a variety of internal and external factors. The role of international support for the opposition is noted by Goati (2001b), Cevallos (2001) and Carothers

¹⁰⁶ The Fall of Milošević, episode 3, BBC documentary series broadcast on 19 January 2003.

(2001), though none of these authors consider that this alone can explain the events of September and October 2000. Among the internal factors considered to be important are the decline in the importance of national issues relative to concerns about economic and social problems (Gordy, 2000: 79; Pavlović, 2001: 2); changes in the strategy and behaviour of the democratic opposition parties and its ability to present a credible alternative (Pavlović, 2001: 2-3; Goati, 2001b); and miscalculations on the part of Milošević, in particular his decision to call and contest direct elections for the Yugoslav presidency and his miscalculations regarding the relative strength of his regime (Goati, 2001b: 54; Pavlović, 2001: 6; Bujošević and Radovanović, 2003: 2).

While all of these factors are undoubtedly important, what is of greatest significance within the context of this research is the impact that international policy had on the democratic opposition parties and the effectiveness of DOS's electoral challenge to Milošević. As such, while clearly acknowledging that non-party groups such as Otpor, and longer term factors such as changes in the priorities of the Serbian electorate, the declining popularity of the Milošević regime and also its weakness, made substantial contributions to Milošević's downfall, the focus here is on the activities of the democratic opposition parties and the contribution that they made to the collapse of the regime. However, this is not meant to imply that these factors alone can account for the ending of the Milošević regime.

Throughout 1998 and 1999 the democratic opposition parties were under considerable internal and external pressure to unite against the Milošević regime. However, in spite of efforts to present a united front it was clear that the key divisions could not be overcome, and as such, the unity envisaged by those who were putting pressure on the parties, failed to materialise. While the inability of the major opposition parties to present a united front undermined the prospects of an opposition

victory in the forthcoming elections, Pavlović argues that a significant change in opposition strategy occurred in August 2000 and that this was a key reason for DOS's success. Pavlović, who is highly critical of both Drašković and Djindjić, argues that until this point Serbia's main opposition leaders were motivated more by their wish to establish themselves as leader of the opposition than they were by the desire to destroy the Milošević regime, but notes that 'The principles of the unification of the opposition were radically changed when Djindjić announced at the beginning of August that Koštunica was an acceptable presidential candidate behind who the whole opposition could stand'¹⁰⁷ (Pavlović, 2001: 3). Pavlović argues that without this change Milošević would have won once again and the whole of the opposition would have met the same fate as that of the SPO after the 2000 elections¹⁰⁸ (Pavlović, 2001: 4).

That DOS's choice of candidate to oppose Milošević was Koštunica is also an important factor in explaining the coalition's success. As a presidential candidate Koštunica had several advantages over either Drašković or Djindjić, not least of which was his lack of involvement in most of the opposition feuding that had taken place over the preceding years. Furthermore, while both Drašković and Djindjić had been undermined by their willingness to negotiate with Milošević, Koštunica had been a fierce critic of the regime throughout his political career. Summarising Koštunica's attributes, de Krnjević-Mišković notes that his 'political career was untainted by any past associations with Milošević, communism, the West, or Drašković, and he had a reputation for humility, honesty, principle, and moderate nationalism. He was, in other words, untouchable' (de Krnjević-Mišković, 2001: 102). A further attribute in Koštunica's favour, was his reputation as a moderate

¹⁰⁷ Author's translation.

¹⁰⁸ Author's translation.

nationalist which made it 'very difficult for the regime to smear Koštunica as a traitor or NATO sycophant who was serving the "colonial" interests of the United States and its allies'¹⁰⁹ (Cohen, 2001: 410).

Goati identifies a further characteristic that sets the DOS campaign apart from earlier election confrontations, noting that in 2000 DOS represented a credible alternative to the Milošević regime at the domestic level. That the 2000 elections were the first in which Serbia's population became 'polarized in relation to the regime' (Gordy, 2001: 79) is, perhaps, at least in part, testament to the credibility of DOS as an alternative. While the unity of the DOS coalition and its support for Koštunica contributed to DOS appearing as a credible alternative to the regime, other factors are also important in this regard. In contrast to previous election campaigns, DOS put forward a coherent programme, drawn up by the G17 group, setting out clearly the measures it intended to implement during its first year in power.¹¹⁰ According to Goati, the coalition 'thoroughly described the devastating effects of the ruling regime's policy in the past decade,' (Goati, 2001a: 244), while 'offering them a convincing alternative project of democratic and market transformations' (Goati, 2001b: 53).

Another factor that probably contributed to DOS's credibility was the clear position of the IC that once Milošević was removed from power, the sanctions against Serbia would be lifted automatically and the country would receive international aid (Antonić, 2002: 323). As such, campaign promises that, following a DOS victory, Serbia's economic situation and its international position would improve significantly,

¹⁰⁹ A further advantage of Koštunica's reputation as a nationalist was evident when polls indicated that he could secure the votes of 19% of voters who regularly supported the SRS (Cohen, 2001: 362).

¹¹⁰ 'Demokratska opozicija Srbije: Program za demokratsku Srbiju', printed in *Vreme* 502, 19 August 2000.

an issue that a substantial portion of the electorate considered important,¹¹¹ were entirely credible. Furthermore, through its concessions to the opposition in relation to the sanctions, the IC had demonstrated its willingness to work with the opposition and to demonstrate to the Serbian electorate that, with Milošević removed from power, Serbia could expect international assistance. While this offered tangible benefits to the electorate should Milošević be rejected, it also undermined the ability of the regime to portray the sanctions as part of an international conspiracy against Serbia, as it linked them directly to Milošević himself. The willingness of the IC to make concessions with regard to the sanctions is in marked contrast to earlier election campaigns, and in particular Panić's 1992 challenge to Milošević, when, as Panić was promising the removal of sanctions if he won the election, the UN was simultaneously tightening its sanctions against the SRJ.

Another aspect of international policy that may, ultimately have had an impact on the eventual victory of DOS, is its use of sanctions targeted directly at the regime and its close associates in the late 1990s. While this will not have had a substantial impact on the level of support for DOS, it is likely to have contributed to the weakness of the Milošević regime, and as such, indirectly assisted DOS in defending its victory at the polls. Stojanović considers this to have been a significant factor, and asks, with a degree of bitterness, how it can be explained that 'only after several years of collective sanctions against Serbia did the West "remember" to direct them selectively against Milošević, his family, and his top-ranking officials?' Once this had occurred, he claims, 'Milošević's elite now understood definitively that they had to abandon him if they wished to save their own skins. Their main concern became to

¹¹¹ According to an opinion survey carried out at the December 1999 57% of SPS supporters, 85% of SRS supporters and 96-100% of the supporters of various opposition parties were 'dissatisfied with Yugoslavia's international standing (Cohen, 2001: 357).

ensure that they do not get on the West's black list, or for those already on it, to ensure that they got off it' (Stojanović, 2003: 205).

A number of analysts also note the importance of that fact that, since 1997, the opposition had been governing in a significant number of towns and cities throughout Serbia (Bieber, 2003: 81; Gordy, 2000: 80; ICG, 2000: 17). While the personal rivalry between Djindjić and Drašković led to the collapse of Zajedno at the national level, in many of those towns where Zajedno took power in 1997, the coalition persisted, and in others the DS and the SPO continued to co-operate and governed together (ICG, 2000: 17). This development had several consequences that were of benefit to DOS in September 2000. The ICG emphasises that this demonstrated the ability of the opposition to govern effectively, even in the less than favourable environment created by the Milošević regime, which had a positive impact on the credibility and image of the democratic opposition (ICG, 2000: 2), while Gordy and Bieber note the opposition's control of local media outlets which extended the reach of non-state controlled media beyond Belgrade, and which helped to offset, to some extent, the regime's dominance in the media sphere (Gordy, 2000: 80; Bieber, 2003: 80). Thus, as a result of their successes in 1996/1997, the opposition was able to reach a considerably larger number of Serbia's citizens than had been the case in many other electoral campaigns which contributed to significantly broadening the support base of the democratic opposition (Gordy, 2000: 80). The increased support for the democratic opposition, combined with its success in convincing a substantial number of Serbia's undecided voters, (more than half the electorate) to support the opposition in 2000, resulted in a victory for DOS, the scale of which made it impossible for Milošević to manipulate the results in the way in which he had in earlier elections (Goati, 2001b: 53).

While the above factors go some way towards explaining the success of DOS in the September election campaign, further action was needed to defend that victory and to force the regime to concede defeat. Knowing that Milošević was unlikely to accept an opposition victory, a group of DOS leaders, excluding Koštunica, met the week before the election to formulate plans for the post-election period. According to Čović, the DOS leaders 'agreed we would do whatever it took. We'd even use guns if we had to. There was no turning back now.'¹¹² As such, included among the ranks of the democratic opposition on 5 October were armed groups, including 'disaffected members of the police and military who had fought in Kosovo, Bosnia and Croatia' (Cevallos, 2001: 2). While ultimately, Milošević's fall was peaceful, the potential for violence clearly existed (Antonić, 2001: 37-38; Goati, 2001b: 56). Goati considers that the willingness of the opposition to resort to force if necessary was a significant factor in their ultimate victory over Milošević. He argues that, what he refers to as 'latent force,' played an 'essential role' and 'should not be underestimated when discussing the deep-seated political turnabout achieved on 5 October' (Goati, 2001b: 56). Antonić also agrees that this is a significant factor accounting for DOS's successful defence of its electoral victories, pointing out that while the majority of previous anti-regime demonstrations had been peaceful and non-violent, on this occasion, some opposition leaders and participants in the demonstration were prepared to use force if necessary¹¹³ (Antonić, 2002: 337). That force was not used resulted from the weakness of the regime confronted with significant numbers of potentially violent demonstrators, such that, when Milošević issued orders to crush the demonstrators with force, they were not obeyed (Antonić, 2001: 37; Goati, 2001: 56).

¹¹² The Fall of Milošević, episode 3, BBC documentary series broadcast on 19 January 2003.

¹¹³ Author's translation.

While DOS and the democratic opposition parties were not solely responsible for the downfall of Milošević in 2000, they nevertheless made a significant contribution in terms of both successfully challenging the regime in the 2000 elections and also in defending their subsequent victory when Milošević refused to concede defeat. The success of the DOS campaign can be attributed to the opposition overcoming some, though not all, of the divisions that had characterised their previous campaigns, formulating a clear alternative to the regime, and building on the success that they had enjoyed in the 1996 local elections.

Conclusions

The differences between the democratic opposition parties and the Milošević regime

The overriding priority of the IC in this time period was the removal of the Milošević regime from power in Serbia, and so, for the first time, the IC and Serbia's democratic opposition parties were prioritising the same goal. As such, the differences between the Milošević regime and the democratic opposition on this key issue are self-evident and require no further discussion. However, the purpose of considering the differences between the Milošević regime and the opposition is to examine whether or not the opposition can be considered to have been a credible alternative to the regime from an IC perspective. While clearly the extent of IC support for the opposition, and in particular for DOS in its 2000 electoral campaign, provides a clear answer to this question, examining the relationship between the democratic opposition parties and the IC reveals that, in spite of their common goal, there was tension

between the two in relation to how this was to be achieved, and also in relation to other issues such as the plight of Kosovo's Serb minority and the need for Serbia's future leaders to cooperate with the ICTY.

Particularly noteworthy is the difference between the stance of the IC and that of Koštunica on the issue of future cooperation with the ICTY, an issue that had been of considerable importance to the IC for some time, and had been a source of tension between the IC and the Serbian and Yugoslav authorities in the past. Koštunica had consistently questioned the legitimacy of the tribunal, and stated that it would not be a priority for Serbia's new leaders should they come to power. That this issue did not lead to any reduction in IC support for the democratic opposition, or even to any significant criticism of its position, demonstrates the extent to which Milošević's removal eclipsed all other international objectives by highlighting that, to a large extent, the credibility of the democratic opposition from the IC's perspective related overwhelmingly to whether it could present a credible alternative domestically, and as such effectively challenge the regime and hopefully oust Milošević.

The relationship between the IC and the democratic opposition parties

The democratic opposition parties, and in particular the SZP, worked closely with the IC throughout this time period and received considerable international support for their campaigns against the regime. Opposition leaders met regularly with IC representatives at a high level, and this cooperation was formalised in the Trilateral Commission established in late 1999. Furthermore, the democratic opposition's leaders increasingly came to be considered as Serbia's legitimate international representatives and were invited to informally represent Serbia at meetings of the

OSCE and the Stability Pact. As such, while the Serbian authorities remained significantly isolated, there was a high level of international engagement with the democratic opposition.

The IC provided extensive support to the democratic opposition throughout this time period with international actors regularly expressing the desire to see Milošević ousted. In addition to expressions of support, the IC also provided financial and technical assistance to the opposition, and particularly to DOS once the elections had been announced in 2000. Furthermore, the IC also demonstrated a willingness to support the opposition through the suspension of sanctions, such as the flight ban, and also through providing assistance to opposition controlled municipalities with the Energy for Democracy programme, providing tangible evidence of the benefits that could accrue to Serbia if Milošević were removed from power. While the democratic opposition parties were critical of some elements of IC policy, such as the sanctions, the situation of Kosovo's Serb minority, and the international emphasis on the need to co-operate with the ICTY, this did not lead to a major rift between the two.

The impact of international policy on the democratic opposition parties

The DOS campaign was a great success for the democratic opposition which saw it overcome some of the weaknesses that had undermined it in the past - namely opposition disunity and the inability to present a credible alternative to the regime - in addition to also successfully carrying out the tasks necessary to effectively oppose the regime (resisting integration; maintaining a zone of ideological autonomy; questioning the legitimacy of the regime and raising the costs of authoritarian rule; and presenting a credible alternative domestically and internationally).

In terms of overcoming opposition weaknesses, DOS's greatest success was its ability to present itself as a credible alternative to the regime which was facilitated by the unity of the DOS coalition and its acceptance of a joint programme that clearly set out the political, legal and economic reforms that the coalition intended to introduce within its first year in power.

In addition to overcoming these weaknesses, DOS also successfully carried out all of the tasks necessary to effectively oppose the regime. All of the parties considered in this study successfully resisted integration into the regime in this time period. While initially the SPO maintained a somewhat more accommodating stance vis-à-vis the regime than did the other democratic opposition parties, this changed in 2000 and while the party was not willing to join the DOS coalition it was also unprepared to offer support to the ruling regime.

The opposition also had considerably greater success in maintaining a zone of ideological autonomy in this time period than was the case in previous time periods, enabling it to fight the election campaign on an agenda that suited the opposition and which was highly detrimental to the regime. To a very large extent, they were aided by groups such as Otpor in achieving this, though the democratic opposition parties themselves also contributed. That the central question in the 2000 election campaign was the rejection or continued acceptance of the regime demonstrates the extent to which Milošević's previous strength in setting the political agenda was severely eroded by 2000. The regime's attempts to portray the opposition as agents of the west attempting to undermine Serbia ultimately failed, and the choice of Koštunica as DOS's candidate contributed to this failure. While the ability of the democratic opposition parties to influence the agenda of political competition in previous elections was significantly undermined by international policy in previous time

periods, this was not the case at this time. Furthermore, international actors seemed well aware of the potential damage they could cause the opposition and exhibited a degree of sensitivity in relation to contentious issues such as future cooperation with the ICTY.

Another area in which the opposition performed well was in questioning the legitimacy of the regime and demonstrating the costs of Milošević's rule. Again, while much credit belongs to non-party groups such as Otpor and G17, the democratic opposition parties also played a role. As noted above, through their election campaign and programme, DOS did much to outline the damage that the Milošević regime had caused to Serbia over the course of the previous decade and also to highlight the undemocratic nature of Milošević's rule. That the IC finally rejected any possibility that Milošević could become a legitimate leader again enhanced the ability of the democratic opposition in this regard.

International policy undoubtedly had a more positive impact on the effectiveness of the democratic opposition parties at this time than it had in other time period considered in this research. On a practical level, the provision of financial and technical assistance to the opposition, and in particular to the DOS election campaign, will certainly have helped the democratic opposition parties to overcome some of the many disadvantages that it faced from competing in the unequal conditions that prevailed in all elections in Serbia during the Milošević era.

In relation to helping the opposition parties to overcome the weaknesses that undermined them for much of the 1990s, the IC contributed to the unity of the opposition coalition that was an important element in DOS's victory through applying pressure on the opposition parties to work together. In addition to the external pressure, the democratic opposition parties also faced considerable internal pressure.

It is not possible to determine the relative contribution of internal and external pressure for opposition unity, and as such, it cannot be claimed that IC pressure was decisive in this regard. However, the IC's contribution was certainly significant.

Internal and external influences also played a role in enhancing the ability of the democratic opposition to maintain a zone of ideological autonomy against the regime and to present a credible alternative to the regime. Again, it is difficult to assess the relative contributions of domestic and international actors. In terms of presenting a credible alternative to the regime, the DOS coalition itself and also the G17 plus group that played a significant role in drafting DOS's electoral platform, clearly made major contributions. However, international financial and technical assistance also made a significant contribution to the DOS campaign. Similarly, while non-party actors such as Otpor contributed to the ability of the opposition to maintaining a zone of ideological autonomy at this time, international financial assistance to Otpor will certainly have enhanced its ability to do so. As such, while the IC's contribution to the success of the opposition in maintaining a zone of ideological autonomy and presenting a credible alternative was essentially that of a facilitator, it nevertheless enhanced the ability of the democratic opposition parties to carry out these tasks.

In summary, international policy enhanced the effectiveness of the democratic opposition parties at this time. Its financial and technical assistance strengthened the ability of the opposition to present a credible alternative to the Milošević regime and also to maintain a zone of ideological autonomy. International pressure contributed to helping the opposition to overcome its disunity, one of the key weaknesses that undermined it in previous time periods. Furthermore, international actors were careful to ensure that they did not exert a negative influence in relation to issues such as

Koštica's rejection of the ICTY, which might have undermined the opposition had they done so. While on the whole the IC's role was essentially that of facilitating those within Serbia who were attempting to bring about change rather than acting as a decisive factor, its positive contribution is nonetheless significant.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

The post-Cold War era has seen the increasing use of international coercion against 'rogue states' in an effort to compel the target state to alter behaviour considered objectionable by other states and international actors. The use of sanctions to achieve such ends increased significantly in the immediate post-Cold War period, while recent years have seen the IC resort to the use of military force to achieve its objectives in Afghanistan, Iraq and Yugoslavia. However, while this increase in the use of coercion has sparked debates among both academics and policymakers regarding the effectiveness of such policies in achieving the aims of the coercer states, little attention has been paid to how these policies have impacted on democratic opposition parties operating in the target states. It has been the purpose of this research to examine this issue in detail, using Milošević's Serbia as a case study.

In spite of the lack of attention that it has received, the impact of coercive policies on democratic opposition parties operating in target states is potentially highly significant. When a state is subjected to coercive policies such as the imposition of sanctions or the threat or use of military force, the intention of the coercer states is to compel the ruling regime to alter the behaviour that they consider objectionable. As such, the goals are political and the aim is to alter the internal political dynamics of the target state in such a way as the target regime complies with international demands and alters its policies and/or actions. This can be achieved either directly by convincing the target government that the costs of continued defiance are greater than the costs of compliance, and thus compelling it to modify its behaviour, or indirectly, by inducing the population of the target state to pressurise the government to concede to international demands or even to overthrow the government.

in a popular uprising. Domestic opposition forces are key players in either scenario. However, in spite of the potential significance of such actors, the impact of sanctions on domestic opposition forces has received little attention within the academic literature, both in relation to the use of wide-ranging comprehensive sanctions and also in relation to the impact of sanctions targeted directly at the regime that the coercer states consider objectionable.

Two attributes of Serbia's experience of coercion during the 1990s make it particularly well suited as a case study for examining the impact of international coercion on democratic opposition parties operating in target states. Firstly, throughout the 1990s democratic opposition parties were active in Serbia and mounted a series of challenges to the Milošević regime both in the electoral arena and also through organising mass demonstrations against the regime. Secondly, throughout the 1990s Serbia was subjected to a wide range of coercive policies including comprehensive UN sanctions in the early 1990s, sanctions targeted directly at the Milošević regime in the late 1990s, and a NATO bombing campaign in 1999. This allows for consideration of the impact of a range of coercive policies on the Serbian democratic opposition parties.

As outlined in chapter two, in order to examine the impact of international coercion on the democratic opposition parties operating in Milošević's Serbia this research has addressed three central themes. The first of these dealt with whether or not Serbia's democratic opposition parties could have been considered as a credible alternative to the Milošević regime from an IC perspective. The relevance of this lies in the fact that had the opposition parties represented a credible alternative partner for the IC, an alternative approach was available to the IC in its dealings with Serbia; namely to assist the democratic opposition in its campaigns against the regime in the

hope that they could defeat Milošević, take power, and implement policies that would be broadly in line with those of the IC. The second theme was to examine the relationship between the democratic opposition and the IC throughout the time period covered by this research in an effort to determine the extent and nature of the links between international actors and the democratic opposition parties and to assess the level of international support for the opposition's campaigns against the regime. Finally, the third question addressed the issue that is at the heart of this research and this is the impact of international policy on the effectiveness of the democratic opposition parties' campaigns against the Milošević regime.

A variety of factors contributed to the inability of Serbia's democratic opposition parties to defeat the Milošević regime throughout the 1990s, in spite of its declining popularity and the disastrous consequences of its policies for Serbia itself, and for other former Yugoslav republics. Undoubtedly, the most significant contribution to the opposition's failure was the regime itself and the undemocratic nature of its rule. However, while the undemocratic nature of the Milošević regime is certainly a key element of any explanation for the failure of the democratic opposition parties to defeat it, other factors also contributed. In particular Serbia's democratic opposition, which often appeared weak and divided, on occasion offering support to the regime, and rarely offering much in the way of a credible alternative to the Serbian electorate, certainly made its own contribution to the duration of Milošević's rule. The purpose of this research has been to consider the relationship between Serbia's democratic opposition parties and the IC in order to examine the impact of international policy on the ability of the democratic opposition's effectiveness in its campaigns against the Milošević regime. In order to address this issue the overall time period considered in this research was broken down into five sub-periods in each of

which Serbia's experience of international coercion differed in its nature and/or extent, with these sub-periods constituting the five case studies that have formed the basis of this research. Using Alexander George's methodology of structured, focused comparison three central questions, based on the above-mentioned themes, were asked in relation to each of the case studies: to what extent did the positions of the democratic opposition parties' positions on issues that were of key importance to the IC differ from those of the Milošević regime? What was the nature and extent of the relationship between the democratic opposition parties and the IC? And what, if any, impact did international policy have on the effectiveness of the democratic opposition parties in their campaigns against the Milošević regime? As noted in chapter two, the great advantage of using George's methodology is that it allows for comparison of the impact of the different approaches that the IC used in coercing Serbia over the course of the time period from 1992 to 2000.

While the third research question constitutes the core focus of this study, the inclusion of the first and second questions provides for a more complete picture of the relationship between the democratic opposition parties and the IC throughout the entire time period considered here. As noted above, the first question allows for consideration of the whether, at least in principle, an alternative approach of strengthening the opposition in order to promote regime change in Serbia was available to the IC, an important issue given the widespread argument in some international commentary that the opposition was as unacceptable as Milošević, as was discussed in chapter one. With respect to the second question, through considering the relationship between the IC and the democratic opposition parties in each case study it is possible to outline the extent and nature of international support for the opposition throughout the time period from 1992 to 2000.

In order to evaluate the impact of international policy on Serbia's democratic opposition this research has examined the major challenges to the Milošević regime that were undertaken in each time period and considered the extent to which the IC either undermined or enhanced the ability of the democratic opposition parties to perform the tasks necessary to effectively oppose a regime such as Milošević's. Based on a modified list of tasks of a democratic opposition in an authoritarian regime as described by Stepan, and discussed in chapter one, these are: resisting integration into the regime; guarding zones of ideological autonomy against the regime; questioning the legitimacy of the regime and raising the costs of authoritarian rule; and presenting a credible alternative to the regime both internationally and domestically. In addition, several weaknesses are considered to have characterised Serbia's democratic opposition parties during the Milošević era: the disunity of the opposition, the opposition's nationalism, and the inability of the opposition to present a credible alternative to the regime. Using these tasks necessary to effectively oppose the regime, the impact of international policy on the democratic opposition parties and the extent to which the IC may have exacerbated the opposition's weaknesses or helped the opposition to overcome them, is evaluated.

Differences between the democratic opposition parties and the Milošević regime

Until mid-1999 the IC's priorities in its dealings with Serbia for the most part related to issues of Serbian nationalism and the national question, while, as noted in chapter one, Serbia's democratic opposition parties have often been criticised for supporting nationalist policies as extreme as those of the Milošević regime if not more so. However, an examination of the positions of the democratic opposition parties

over the course of the eight years considered in this study reveals a far more complex picture. As was demonstrated in the first case study, throughout 1992 there were clear differences between the democratic opposition parties and the Milošević regime with all parties rejecting the regime's war policies and supporting Milan Panić's attempts to co-operate with international efforts to resolve the conflicts in the former-Yugoslavia. This was evident in the opposition's support for Panić at the London Conference, in its support for his presidential election campaign and also in its support for his intention to apply for UN membership for the SRJ. Furthermore, while there is evidence that the democratic opposition parties were broadly in favour of nationalist goals, they were openly opposed to the use of force to achieve these goals. Thus, at this time, the democratic opposition parties can be considered to have held positions on the issues that were of key importance for the IC that were different to those of the Milošević regime, and closer to those of the IC itself. As such, in principle, at this time the Serbian democratic opposition can be considered to have been a credible alternative partner from an IC perspective.

Following the defeat of the opposition parties, and also of Panić, in the December 1992 elections, this consensus gradually broke down between 1993 and 1994, with the DS and the DSS taking on more nationalist positions with respect to the conflict in Bosnia, although even at this time there is no evidence that either of these parties supported the use of force to achieve nationalist goals. Evidence of the increasing nationalism of the DSS was clear in its rejection of the VOPP and also the Contact Group peace plan. In addition, while the party welcomed the Dayton agreement in the sense that it brought the conflict in Bosnia to an end, it was, nevertheless, dissatisfied with many of its provisions. The DS initially maintained its more moderate position, supporting the VOPP, but later followed the DSS in rejecting

the Contact Group peace plan and expressing support for the Bosnian Serb leadership in Pale. Following the end of the Bosnian war however, the DS soon abandoned its more nationalist orientation, making significant efforts to distance itself from its previous positions indicating the extent to which this was a pragmatic move, based on the party's calculations of how best to challenge Milošević who had abandoned the nationalist cause, choosing instead to co-operate with international efforts to resolve the Bosnian conflict.

The SPO and the GSS remained committed to their anti-war policies throughout the Bosnian conflict, supporting international efforts to resolve the conflict, and refusing to use Milošević's co-operation with the IC against him. They supported all international peace plans proposed by the IC, and were also highly critical of the IC's acceptance of a territorial division of Bosnia. Both parties argued that this not only strengthened the hand of nationalists in Serbia, but also undermined those who had opposed the war, and increased the likelihood of further ethnic conflict. As such, in the time period covered by the second case study, the democratic opposition parties were divided in relation to the Serbian national question. However, while the DS and the DSS held positions that were at odds with those of the IC, the GSS and the SPO retained the more moderate stance that they had held in 1992 and as such could be considered to have been credible alternative partners for the IC.

As was outlined in the third case study, following the end of the Bosnian war, the importance of the national question in Serbian politics declined somewhat, with attention focusing more on domestic concerns. However, for the IC national questions remained predominant, as compliance with the Dayton agreement and, to a lesser extent, the situation in Kosovo, became the most important issues for the IC at this time. As such, the opposition parties, three of which were now united in the Zajedno

coalition, made efforts to demonstrate its support for Dayton, arguing repeatedly that, should it come to power, it would honour the Dayton commitments. As was seen in chapter five, Milošević was subject to international criticism and pressure in relation to his failure to fully implement Dayton, and in this respect it could be argued that the democratic opposition, in the form of the Zajedno coalition, held positions that were different to those of the regime and closer to those of the IC, and as such can be considered to have been a credible alternative partner to the Milošević regime.

In relation to the national question a key theme in opposition discourse at this time was the futility of attempting to address these issues and resolve conflicts in the absence of democratic reform in Serbia. Clearly identifying Milošević as the primary source of regional instability and as the instigator of the conflicts that occurred during the first half of the 1990s, the democratic opposition parties consistently argued that he should not be considered as a factor for regional stability. Furthermore, the opposition had warned the IC that while Milošević remained in power, there was a very real danger that Kosovo would become his next battlefield. However, although the need for democratic reform in Serbia did become a key issue on the international agenda during the course of the winter protests of 1996/1997, once the local election victories of the Zajedno coalition were recognised, and the protests came to an end, international pressure on Milošević to enact electoral reform along the lines suggested in the Gonzalez report diminished significantly.

In line with its position that ethnic conflict in the region could not be eradicated while Milošević remained in power, the democratic opposition parties became increasingly frustrated with the IC and its focus on the Milošević regime in its efforts to deal with the Kosovo conflict, which became the central focus of international attention in its dealings with Serbia from 1998 onwards. The democratic

opposition parties, arguing that Kosovo was part of Serbia and should remain so, were all opposed to granting independence to Kosovo. However, given that this was also the stated position of the IC, it cannot be considered either controversial or to have prevented the democratic opposition from being considered as a credible alternative to the Milošević regime from an IC perspective. Furthermore, while it is the case that in opposing independence for Kosovo the democratic opposition parties held essentially the same position as that of the Milošević regime, it is also clear that there were important differences between the DS and the GSS, at this time united within the SZP, and the Milošević regime. The SZP supported the involvement of the IC in the Kosovo conflict, including accepting the need for an international military presence there, though there was a clear preference that this should be a UN force. As such, the SZP can be considered to have been a credible alternative partner for the IC at this time.

In contrast, while the DSS also accepted international involvement in resolving the Kosovo dispute, its criticism of the IC at this time shows that this cannot be seen as an endorsement of international policy. Throughout 1998 and 1999 the SPO's position was considerably closer to that of the Milošević regime than were those of the other democratic opposition parties, as is evident in its decision to join the federal government in 1999. However, there was considerable inconsistency in the position of the SPO, with Drašković espousing increasingly erratic and contradictory positions, considerably undermining his and his party's credibility both internationally and domestically.

As was seen in the final case study, in the aftermath of the Kosovo conflict the IC radically altered its approach to Serbia, with the removal of Milošević becoming the main IC priority and international assistance to the democratic opposition was

identified as the most promising way to achieve the new IC goal of regime change. Given the fact that the IC and the democratic opposition parties were now pursuing the same goal – the removal of Milošević – differences between the democratic opposition and the Milošević regime on the issues that were of central importance to the IC are self-evident. The extent of international support clearly shows that the IC considered the democratic opposition parties to be a credible alternative partner to the Milošević regime. Furthermore, differences between some members of the democratic opposition and the IC in relation to issues that the IC considered to be important, such as the co-operation with the ICTY and the situation in Kosovo, did not have any negative impact on the level of support that the IC was willing to provide to the democratic opposition.

In summary, while at times most of Serbia's democratic opposition parties did adopt nationalist positions at odds with those of the IC, it is nevertheless clear that, on the whole, throughout the time period between 1992 and 2000, the democratic opposition held positions that were different to those of the Milošević regime and closer to those of the IC on the issues that were of central importance internationally. In 1992 this was the case for all four parties considered here, while in later periods at times the DS, the DSS and the SPO held positions that were at odds with those of the IC. However, in all five of the case studies it is clear that there were opposition parties within Serbia that held positions that were broadly in line with those of the IC, and as such, represented a credible alternative to the Milošević regime from an international perspective.

The relationship between the IC and the democratic opposition parties

In considering the relationship between the democratic opposition parties and the Milošević regime throughout the entire time period from 1992 to 2000, it is clear that, at least until 1997, there was little regular contact between the democratic opposition parties and IC representatives. Throughout this time period, the IC focused almost exclusively on coercing Milošević in the hope that this would compel him to alter the policies that the IC considered objectionable, and there is no evidence that a policy of promoting the opposition to effect regime change in Serbia was even considered as an alternative approach by international actors. While the relationship between the democratic opposition parties and the IC changed over time, with greater interaction between the two following the 1996/1997 protests in Serbia, it was not until after the 1999 NATO bombing of Kosovo that the IC actively sought to assist the democratic opposition parties in their campaigns against the regime.

In the first half of the 1990s, the international focus on issues relating to Serbian nationalism worked to the advantage of the Milošević regime in terms of ensuring that the Serbian national question remained at the centre of political discourse in Serbia. Furthermore, the imposition of sanctions against the SRJ at this time allowed Milošević to deny all responsibility for the disastrous economic policies of his government, portraying Serbia as the victim of an international anti-Serb conspiracy.

While these circumstances greatly undermined the ability of the democratic opposition parties to oppose the regime, it was, nevertheless, in this environment that one of the most significant challenges to Milošević was mounted, when the democratic opposition parties united in support of Milan Panić's electoral challenge to

Milošević in December 1992. In spite of the fact that, at this time, the democratic opposition was openly blaming Milošević for the imposition of sanctions and opposing his war policies, as was seen in chapter three, the IC did little to help the opposition in this campaign. The failure of the IC to support the democratic opposition at this time or to develop any relationship with those inside Serbia who were opposing Milošević's war policies, represents a lost opportunity for the IC as by the end of 1993 the opposition was already showing signs of division with respect to the national question. Furthermore, by the time of the 1993 election campaign, unable to compete with the regime's propaganda, the opposition began to blame the IC, rather than the Milošević regime, for the imposition of the sanctions, effectively adopting the stance of the regime.

As was noted in chapter four, to a certain extent the change in the opposition's stance with respect to the Milošević regime resulted from the ability of the regime to portray its war policies as having been largely successful in terms of defending Serb interests in other former Yugoslav republics. To a very great extent this was facilitated by a change in international policy with respect to the Bosnian conflict. The abandonment of the previous IC position that any resolution of the Bosnian conflict must involve a unitary Bosnian state, and the acceptance of an ethnically based division of Bosnia's territory, was a considerable concession to Serbian nationalists and enabled Milošević to claim some success in terms of achieving nationalist goals, enhancing his self-perpetuated image as the true defender of Serb interests. While the decision of the opposition parties to direct its criticism at international policy and UN sanctions in the 1993 election campaign may have resulted from poor judgement on their part, Milošević's control of the Serbian media made it exceptionally difficult for any party that was trying to promote alternative interpretations of Serbia's

predicament. Furthermore, the lack of international support for the opposition during 1992 when it was openly critical of Milošević's war policies, for which the opposition were labelled as traitors in the state controlled media, meant that there was no incentive for the democratic opposition to continue promoting a generally pro-Western course in 1993.

Following the arrest of Drašković in 1993, the IC openly sided with the democratic opposition against the regime, and this led to increased interaction between the democratic opposition and international actors at this time. However, this did not lead to any significant long-term changes in IC-opposition relations. Following Drašković's release the IC returned to its previous pattern of engagement with Serbia, focusing exclusively on trying to gain concessions through maintaining pressure on Milošević. As such, the opportunity to develop closer relations with the democratic opposition following Drašković's release was not taken. Furthermore, while Drašković's detention had focused international attention on the undemocratic nature of the Milošević regime, once the situation was resolved, the IC did not apply pressure for wider democratic reform, as was evident in the lack of international attention to the December 1993 elections.

Throughout 1994 and 1995 the opposition became bitterly divided with respect to the national question, with both the DS and the DSS choosing a more nationalist orientation, while the GSS and the SPO remained committed to supporting international peace plans designed to bring the conflict to an end. Throughout these years the opposition mounted no major challenges to the regime. Milošević, hailed now as a peacemaker, played a key role in the negotiations that led to the Dayton agreement - being the internationally favoured representative of the Bosnian Serbs - and was rewarded with the lifting of UN sanctions.

In the post-Dayton period, Milošević's status as a signatory of the Dayton agreement and the IC's perception that his co-operation was essential for regional stability, ensured that Milošević was not subjected to any significant international pressure to introduce democratic reforms in Serbia, demonstrating that the IC still did not consider Serbia's internal political order to be a priority. As such, the IC made no efforts to assist the democratic opposition parties in opposing Milošević or to develop links between the democratic opposition and international actors. However, through their protests of 1996/1997 the democratic opposition parties forced the issue of the undemocratic nature of Milošević's rule onto the international agenda.

The events of 1996/1997 altered the relationship between the democratic opposition parties and the IC by greatly increasing the opposition's international profile. Throughout this time democratic opposition leaders regularly met with IC representatives to appeal for support and discuss the situation in Serbia, and this increased level of contact between the democratic opposition and IC representatives continued following the recognition of the opposition's electoral victories. Furthermore, in the aftermath of the protests the IC commented more frequently on the need for democratic reform in Serbia. However, any hopes on the part of the democratic opposition that the events of 1996/1997 would fundamentally alter the relationship between the IC and the Milošević regime were ultimately disappointed. Once Milošević had backed down with respect to the local election results and recognised the Zajedno victories, Serbia's internal order was again relegated to the background and the democratic opposition continued to receive little international support in its efforts to force Milošević to accept democratic reform. The unwillingness of the IC to exert sufficient pressure on Milošević to fully implement the recommendations of the Gonzales report represented a further missed opportunity

for the IC to give much-needed assistance to the democratic opposition and add credence to the claims of the opposition parties that the IC was prepared to tolerate Milošević's autocratic rule because it perceived that, as a signatory of the Dayton agreement, Milošević was essential to regional stability. Thus, in spite of the fact that Milošević was under considerable international and internal pressure at this time, international support to the democratic opposition extended only so far as ensuring its electoral victories were recognised, with no real support for the opposition's demands for further democratic reform. The arguments of the democratic opposition parties that Milošević was the cause of much of the regional instability, and so could not be considered as a factor for stability, received little international attention, in spite of the warnings of the opposition parties regarding the likelihood of future conflict in Kosovo.

As was seen in the fourth case study, when conflict in Kosovo did intensify throughout 1998 and 1999 the initial international response remained essentially the same as it had been during the Bosnian conflict, with international actors attempting to pressurise the regime through the use of sanctions in the hope that this would lead to a change in policy on the part of the Serbian authorities. When this failed, the IC, claiming to have learnt from the Bosnian conflict that only a credible threat of force was likely to influence Milošević, threatened NATO air strikes if Milošević did not comply with its demands. The lesson that the IC appeared not to have learnt from earlier experience with Milošević, was that the regime had always used conflict in order to maintain power within Serbia, in spite of the fact that the democratic opposition parties had been repeating this assertion over the preceding years.

As outlined in chapter seven, the end of the Kosovo conflict saw a significant change in relations between the IC and the democratic opposition parties. Following

the end of the NATO bombing, and with no feasible alternative, the IC completely changed its approach to dealing with Serbia and began to advocate regime change, seeing the strengthening of the democratic opposition as the best way to achieve this goal. Offering financial and technical assistance to a wide range of pro-democracy forces inside Serbia, IC assistance did much, in practical terms, to help domestic actors mount an effective challenge to the regime. Finally listening to the opinions of the democratic opposition parties that sanctions were counter-productive, the IC began to make efforts to target its punitive measures directly at the regime and its close associates while offering assistance to towns under opposition control. However, while international assistance may have given much-needed financial and technical assistance to the democratic opposition, the role of the IC in the eventual overthrow of the Milošević regime was essentially that of a facilitator. While it is clear that through its support to the democratic opposition parties in the run up to the September 2000 elections, the IC did contribute somewhat to the effectiveness of the opposition challenge to the regime, this is in marked contrast to its negative impact throughout much of the 1990s.

In summary, until mid-1999 the IC's approach to Serbia was focused on attempting to coerce Milošević in order to achieve its objectives in relation to Serbia and there were no serious efforts made to cultivate relations with the democratic opposition parties or to assist them in their campaigns against the regime. While the relationship between the IC and the democratic opposition parties changed over time, with increased contact between the two occurring briefly in mid-1993 as a result of Drašković's arrest, following his release there were no efforts made to build a closer relationship with Serbia's democratic opposition. The events of 1996/1997 had a greater impact on IC-opposition relations in that they led to more regular contact

between the two, and also resulted in more frequent international calls for democratic reform in Serbia. However, the basic pattern of international engagement did not change even at this stage, and as the conflict in Kosovo developed the IC continued to pursue its goals by pressuring Milošević for concessions while making little effort to assist the opposition. In addition, in spite of the more frequent appearance of the need for democratic reform in Serbia on the international agenda, the IC exerted little real pressure on Milošević in this regard. This situation changed dramatically in the aftermath of the NATO bombing when the IC became fully engaged with the democratic opposition, meeting opposition representatives on a regular basis, and providing considerable support for the DOS coalition in the 2000 elections.

The impact of international policy on the democratic opposition parties

As was discussed in chapter one, through considering the tasks of a democratic opposition in an authoritarian regime as outlined by Stepan, it was possible to identify a series of tasks that democratic opposition parties operating in a competitive authoritarian regime need to fulfil in order to effectively oppose that regime: resisting integration into the regime; maintaining a zone of ideological autonomy against the regime; questioning the legitimacy of the regime, and raising the costs of authoritarian rule; and presenting a credible alternative both domestically and internationally. In addition to carrying out these tasks, the democratic opposition also needed to overcome certain weaknesses that characterised it throughout the 1990s, namely the extent of opposition disunity, the opposition's nationalism, and its inability to present a credible alternative to the Milošević regime. One of the central aims of this research has been to examine the impact of international policy on the

ability of the Serbian democratic opposition parties to overcome its weaknesses and to carry out these tasks.

The opposition mounted two major campaigns against the regime between May 1992 and December 1992: anti-regime demonstrations in June, and an electoral challenge in December. Considering the impact of international policy at this time it was shown that this had a generally negative impact. While the democratic opposition parties scored some success in terms of questioning the legitimacy of the regime internally and raising the costs to Milošević of his authoritarian rule, and also successfully resisted integration into the regime, it was less successful in maintaining a zone of ideological autonomy and in presenting a credible alternative at the domestic level. In terms of overcoming the weaknesses that characterised the democratic opposition – its disunity and its inability to present a credible alternative – the opposition was generally successful in maintaining unity; but there was less success in terms of presenting a credible alternative.

The lack of interaction between the IC and the Serbian opposition at this time means that credit for the successes that were achieved in terms of maintaining unity, resisting integration, questioning the legitimacy of the regime and raising the costs of authoritarian rule belongs to the democratic opposition parties themselves and not to the IC as there is no evidence of an indirect impact of international policy in this regard. Evidence of the opposition's success in this regard lies in the concessions that the regime made in relation to the electoral conditions, which while insufficient to ensure that the elections would be free and fair, were, nonetheless, significant.

The democratic opposition was less successful in the December 1992 election campaign. While the inability of the democratic opposition to maintain a zone of ideological autonomy was due in large part to Milošević's control of much of Serbia's

media, international policy did facilitate Milošević in this regard, albeit indirectly. While the democratic opposition parties attempted to fight an election campaign based on the need for political and economic reforms, Milošević's ability to control the agenda ensured that issues of nationalism dominated Serbia's political discourse, while the IC, through its exclusive focus on national issues, to some extent enhanced Milošević's ability to do this.

A further impact of international policy at this time was that it also undermined the ability of the democratic opposition parties to present a credible alternative to the regime. Panić's presidential campaign in December 1992 emphasised that should he win, Serbia's international position would be greatly improved. As such, the IC's refusal to grant his request for a temporary suspension of sanctions, and the decision to tighten sanctions in advance of the elections did much to undermine him. While the impact of IC policy on the ability of the democratic opposition parties was indirect, it is nevertheless clear that to some extent at least, the IC undermined the ability of the democratic opposition parties to maintain a zone of ideological autonomy against the Milošević regime and to present a credible alternative to the regime in the December 1992 elections.

In the second case study, which covers the period between 1993 and 1996, the democratic opposition parties mounted two significant challenges against the Milošević regime: the campaign to secure Drašković's release and the December 1993 elections for the Serbian parliament. While the opposition was generally successful in terms of resisting integration into the regime, it was less successful than it had been in 1992 in questioning the legitimacy of the regime and raising the costs of authoritarian rule. In common with its shortcomings in 1992, the opposition also failed to maintain a zone of ideological autonomy against the regime and to present a

credible alternative. It is also clear that the democratic opposition was less successful in terms of maintaining unity than had been the case in 1992, while the adoption of more nationalist positions on the part of the DSS meant that, in contrast to 1992, the party was undermined by its attempts to compete with Milošević from a nationalist position.

The opposition's campaign to secure Drašković's release following his arrest and detention in June 1993 resulted in a rare success against the regime, with international support being highly significant if not decisive. By appealing to the IC for assistance following Drašković's arrest, the opposition brought the legitimacy of the regime into question at both the domestic and international levels. IC support for the campaign to have Drašković released and international criticism of Milošević's undemocratic practices reinforced the opposition in these efforts. As such, in relation to this campaign against the regime, the IC enhanced the ability of the democratic opposition to effectively oppose the regime.

The opposition was considerably less successful in the December 1993 elections for the Serbian parliament. As was noted in chapter four, the disunity of the opposition, its inability to maintain a zone of ideological autonomy against the regime, and its inability to present a credible alternative to the regime all played a role in the opposition's failure. While to a large extent these deficiencies were due largely to the failings of the democratic opposition parties themselves and to the ability of the Milošević regime to control the political agenda, it is also clear that international policy again indirectly undermined the democratic opposition in its efforts to overcome its weaknesses and carry out the tasks necessary to effectively oppose the regime. As in 1992, the continued focus of the IC on national issues facilitated the regime in this regard. While responsibility for opposition disunity cannot be wholly

attributed to the IC, differences between the parties with respect to international efforts to resolve the Bosnian conflict exacerbated the already existing divisions within the opposition. Furthermore, the change in international policy in favour of a territorial division of Bosnia enabled Milošević to present his national policies as having successfully defended Serb interests, greatly boosting his internal credibility. As such, international policy indirectly undermined the ability of the democratic opposition parties to effectively oppose the Milošević regime.

In the period from 1996 to 1998, there is evidence of both positive and negative impacts of international policy on the effectiveness of Serbia's democratic opposition. At this time, the democratic opposition parties mounted three challenges to the regime: the local and federal election campaigns of November 1996; the winter protests in defence of Zajedno's election victories of 1996/1997; and the Republican elections of 1997.

The greatest success of the opposition in this time period is clearly its successful defence of its victories in the 1996 local elections. Throughout this campaign the Zajedno parties managed to maintain a relatively united front against the regime. In terms of carrying out the tasks necessary to effectively oppose the regime it successfully resisted integration; seriously challenged the regime's legitimacy both domestically and internationally while significantly increasing the costs to the regime of its authoritarian rule; maintained a zone of ideological autonomy against the regime, at least for the duration of the protests; and greatly increased its credibility as an alternative to the Milošević regime domestically while significantly increasing its profile internationally.

From the outset Zajedno appealed to the IC for assistance in its campaign to have its victories recognised, forcing the issue of Serbia's internal political order onto

the international agenda. The scale of the demonstrations and the tenacity of the demonstrators ensured that the IC could not ignore the attempts of the regime to steal the elections. As had been the case in relation to the 1993 campaign to secure Drašković's release, the support of the IC and international criticism of Milošević's undemocratic practices bolstered the opposition's attempts to question the legitimacy of the regime at the domestic level, contributing positively to the ability of the democratic opposition to carry out this task. Additionally, in spite of Milošević's control of much of the Serbian media, to a certain extent the Zajedno leaders managed to maintain a zone of ideological autonomy during the protests as matters relating to the undemocratic nature of the Milošević regime were a key element of political discourse inside Serbia. Given that the independent media covering the protests were a valuable asset in this regard, the key role that the IC played in ensuring that media outlets such as B92 were allowed to continue operating, assisted the democratic opposition in maintaining its zone of ideological autonomy.

As was demonstrated in chapter five, international support was crucial in Milošević's decision to recognise Zajedno's victories, and as such, in addition to enhancing the ability of the democratic opposition to maintain a zone of ideological autonomy and to raise questions about the legitimacy of the regime, the IC also had a positive impact on the final outcome of Zajedno's campaign. However, while international support was undoubtedly significant, it is important to note that the persistence of the Zajedno leaders in highlighting the regime's abuses internationally and their determination to ensure that their victories were recognised, compelled a reluctant IC to demand that Milošević concede defeat.

In the 1997 election campaign, the division between the opposition parties over whether they should compete in elections that would be held in grossly unfair

conditions led to a split in the opposition with the SPO contesting the elections while the other parties boycotted them. The SPO's decision to contest the elections ensured Milošević an easy victory and to a large extent, the failure of this party to fully resist integration into the regime at this time accounts for the opposition's failure. However, in spite of its stated preference that the opposition parties should contest the 1997 elections, the IC exerted no significant pressure on the Milošević regime to implement the recommendations contained in the Gonzalez report, which would have done much to improve the electoral conditions. As such, the IC did nothing to address the issue that was the main source of dispute between the democratic opposition parties, and so, while not directly exacerbating the disunity of the opposition, it is nevertheless the case that the IC also did nothing to help the parties overcome their differences.

In the period from the end of 1997 to mid-1999, international policy had a major detrimental impact on the democratic opposition parties, creating an environment in which they were effectively unable to mount any significant challenges against the Milošević regime. Furthermore, in spite of the success that Zajedno enjoyed in placing the need for democratic reform in Serbia onto the international agenda, even at this stage, with Milošević showing unwillingness to concede to international demands with respect to Kosovo, there was no attempt made by the IC to engage with the democratic opposition parties in an attempt to build a unified opposition to Milošević or to gain support from the opposition parties for its attempts to resolve the Kosovo conflict. Given that there were no significant opposition campaigns against the regime at this time, the issue of whether the IC contributed to the ability of the democratic opposition parties to carry out the tasks necessary to effectively oppose the regime or to overcome its weaknesses did not arise in this case study.

Mid-1999 saw a major change in international policy with respect to Serbia, with the IC now pursuing a policy of regime change, expressing open support for the opposition's campaigns against the regime and offering financial and technical assistance to the opposition parties, in particular for the DOS election campaign in 2000. This period saw the democratic opposition parties successfully carry out all four of the tasks necessary to effectively oppose the regime while also overcoming the differences that had undermined them in earlier time periods. While the success of the DOS campaign can be attributed to a variety of factors, both internal and external, it is certainly the case that international policy at this time had a positive impact on the effectiveness of the opposition's campaign.

In contrast to earlier time periods, the IC made a deliberate effort to help the democratic opposition parties to overcome one of the weaknesses that had consistently undermined it by pressuring the main opposition parties to unite against the regime. Towards the end of 1999 and throughout early 2000, this was generally successful, though it is also clear that there was significant internal pressure in this regard. In addition, by finally rejecting any notion that Milošević could become a legitimate leader again, the IC also assisted the opposition in challenging the regime's legitimacy. Furthermore, as was noted in chapter seven, the IC made efforts to ensure that its comments and actions with respect to sensitive issues such as Koštunica's rejection of the ICTY and the opposition's criticism of international policy with respect to Kosovo, did not damage the opposition's domestic credibility. In this way the IC enhanced the ability of the opposition to maintain a zone of ideological autonomy against the regime. The considerable success of the opposition in this regard is evident in the fact that the only issue that counted in September 2000 was the need to rid Serbia of the Milošević regime.

The ability of the democratic opposition to present a credible alternative to the Milošević regime at the domestic level was also a distinguishing feature of the 2000 election campaign. While democratic forces within Serbia must take a considerable amount of credit for this, international assistance to the democratic opposition parties also contributed. Although the precise impact of international assistance is difficult to assess, it is nevertheless possible to state that international financial and technical assistance to the DOS campaign certainly contributed to the success of the campaign, and in so doing helped DOS to present itself as a credible alternative to the Milošević regime. Furthermore, promises to lift the sanctions once Milošević was removed from power added credibility to the opposition's claims that the living conditions of the Serbian population would improve if they succeeded in ousting the regime. As such, and in marked contrast to earlier election campaigns, international policy had a positive impact on the ability of the democratic opposition parties to carry out the tasks necessary to effectively oppose the regime and also to overcome the weaknesses that had undermined it in the past.

In summary, the impact of international policy on the effectiveness of the democratic opposition parties in their campaigns against the Milošević regime varied over the course of the eight years covered by this research. While at times international policy increased the effectiveness of the opposition, at other times it undermined it. The IC had a positive impact on the effectiveness of the democratic opposition parties' campaign against the Milošević regime in the 2000 elections, in the campaign to ensure that the Milošević regime recognised the electoral victories of the Zajedno coalition in 1996/1997, and in the campaign to secure Drašković's release in June 1993. In all of these cases, international policy impacted directly on the ability of the democratic opposition parties to effectively challenge the regime. These three

examples of the positive impact of international policy on the effectiveness of the democratic opposition's campaigns constitute the only three cases of international intervention in support of the democratic opposition, suggesting that the IC may have had the potential to force Milošević to make concessions on democratic reform had it chosen to do so. However, what is noticeable about the campaigns in which the international impact was generally positive, is that, with the exception of the 2000 election campaign, these were generally less significant than those in which the international impact was negative as they did not pose an immediate threat to Milošević's hold on power.

In all other opposition campaigns against the regime, the impact of international policy was largely negative, though this impact was often indirect. In considering the indirect impact of international policy on the effectiveness of the democratic opposition parties it is clear that between 1992 and 1999 international policy indirectly undermined the democratic opposition. The indirect negative impact of the IC was greatest in the time period covered by the first two case studies. Throughout this time, international policy had a significant indirect impact on the democratic opposition parties' effectiveness particularly in relation to the ability of the democratic opposition parties to maintain a zone of ideological autonomy against the regime, facilitating Milošević in his attempts to ensure that the Serbian national question dominated political discourse, thereby narrowing the political space in which the democratic opposition could operate. In addition, by accepting the territorial division of Bosnia and also by insisting on Milošević as the chief Serb negotiator at Dayton, the IC also enabled Milošević to portray his national policy as having successfully defended Serb interests, while perpetuating his self-generated image as the defender of all Serbs. International policy also had a further indirect and negative

impact on the democratic opposition parties' 1993 election campaign by exacerbating the already existing disunity of the democratic opposition parties as they divided over whether or not to support international efforts to resolve the conflict in Bosnia. Furthermore, the degree of external legitimacy bestowed on Milošević by the IC was used to strengthen his legitimacy internally, and this, in combination with the apparent willingness of international representatives to appear on national television in the presence of regime officials, strengthened Milošević in the 1996 federal election campaign at the expense of the democratic opposition. While the failure of the democratic opposition to effectively challenge the regime in the 1997 republican elections was largely due to the split between the DS, the DSS and the GSS who chose to boycott the elections, and the SPO which contested them, the unwillingness of the IC to exert any real pressure on Milošević to implement the proposals contained in the Gonzalez report demonstrated an unwillingness on the part of the IC to address the issue that was at the heart of the opposition parties' dispute. The negative impact of international policy on the democratic opposition parties at the time of the Kosovo conflict in 1998 and 1999 was so profound that it left them effectively unable to operate. As the result of the severe international reaction to events in Kosovo, the political space in which the opposition could operate again significantly narrowed, virtually disappearing as the threat and eventual use of force against Serbia dominated the political agenda throughout 1998 and the first half of 1999.

In considering the impact of international policy on the effectiveness of the democratic opposition parties throughout the time period from 1992 to 2000, a number of patterns are discernible. While the context dependent nature of this research, and the variety of internal and external factors that impacted on the effectiveness of the democratic opposition parties mean that these patterns are an

insufficient basis on which to draw firm conclusions beyond the case of Serbia, they do, nevertheless, raise important questions which are worthy of further investigation in other contexts.

While the democratic opposition used the initial imposition of sanctions against the Milošević regime, it is clear that their overall impact on the opposition was negative. The UN sanctions that were imposed in 1992 enabled Milošević to portray Serbia's dire economic situation as the result of an unjust international policy rather than something for which he bore great responsibility. This contributed to the difficulties that the opposition parties faced in terms of capitalising on economic catastrophes such as the hyperinflation that occurred in 1993. The sanctions that were targeted at the Milošević regime directly may have done more to undermine Milošević than the earlier UN sanctions, but there is little evidence that they had any direct impact on the democratic opposition parties. However, given that the targeted sanctions were imposed at a time when the IC was actively supporting the democratic opposition and calling for regime change in Serbia, it is not possible to isolate the impact of the sanctions from the impact of international support at this time.

Considering the circumstances in which international policy had a positive impact on the effectiveness of the democratic opposition parties, one similarity between all instances is immediately clear, and this is that international policy only had a positive impact when the IC directly intervened in support of the opposition. This was the case in the 2000 elections, and in the campaigns to secure Drašković's release and to ensure that the Zajedno coalition's electoral victories were recognised. While this does not necessarily imply that international coercion cannot have indirect positive effects on democratic opposition parties in some contexts, this aspect of

Serbia's experience does suggest that this is a question worthy of consideration in the design of international coercive interventions.

In terms of the indirect effects of international policy on Serbia's democratic opposition parties, these were predominantly negative, as was seen in the elections held in 1992 and 1993, and to a certain extent in 1997. This suggests that, in the absence of a specific policy or programme to aid Serbia's democratic opposition, international coercion of Serbia and the SRJ generally undermined the democratic opposition parties' effectiveness in their campaigns against the Milošević regime. However, it is important to keep in mind that the indirect effects of international policy operated in such a way as to reinforce the disadvantages that the democratic opposition parties experienced rather than to create disadvantages that would not otherwise have existed.

Looking at the findings of the individual case studies, a further point is also worth noting and this is that there were two periods of quite prolonged inactivity on the part of the Serbian opposition, the first being between the end of 1993 and the end of 1996, and the second from the end of 1997 to the middle of 1999. Clearly a significant factor that accounts, at least in part, for the absence of opposition activity during these periods was the lack of elections held during either period. However, while this accounts for the fact that there were no formal electoral challenges to the Milošević regime, it does not explain why there were no anti-regime protests or demonstrations organised by the opposition.

As was outlined in chapter six, the environment created by the threat and eventual use of force in 1998 and 1999 made it practically impossible for the democratic opposition parties to operate at this time and to a very great extent this accounts for its inactivity during this period. In the earlier period of opposition

inactivity, the extent of opposition disunity would have made effective action against the regime almost impossible, and this must certainly be considered as a contributory factor in the lack of opposition activity. However, there are similarities between the two periods of inactivity that, while insufficient to form the basis of firm conclusions, are, nonetheless, worth noting. The threat and eventual use of military force against Serbia in 1998 and 1999 was a key element in explaining the lack of opposition activity at this time. While there was not a comparable level of threat to Serbia between the end of 1993 and 1996, there were regular threats to use force against the Bosnian Serbs, and the actual use of force against them in both 1994 and 1995. While this does not imply that the threat and use of force will always undermine a democratic opposition operating in a target state, it does suggest that this is a question that needs to be taken into consideration in evaluating coercive IC policies.

One key aspect of the coercive approach of the IC throughout much of the 1990s that had a detrimental impact on Serbia's democratic opposition was that through attempting to achieve its goals by coercing the Milošević regime, the IC's focus was almost exclusively on Milošević until as late as mid-1999. While this not only undermined the democratic opposition in that such an approach omitted support for the democratic opposition, it also had a detrimental impact by granting Milošević a degree of external legitimacy, giving the impression in the domestic arena that Milošević was a credible and accepted leader from the IC's perspective. This greatly undermined the ability of the democratic opposition parties to dispute the legitimacy of the regime. By treating Milošević as the key factor in resolving conflicts in the former Yugoslavia, the IC contributed to his ability to portray himself as the only potential Serbian leader who could achieve results for Serbia internationally, and also perpetuated the myth he had constructed that he was the ultimate defender of all

Serbs. The argument of the Serbian opposition that as Milošević was the cause of the conflicts he could not also be part of their solution, went largely unheeded until the end of the 1990s.

Following the resolution of the conflict in Bosnia, and the relaxation of international sanctions against Serbia, the IC continued to focus its efforts almost exclusively on the Milošević regime. While there was a clear exception to this general rule as a result of the winter protests of 1996/1997, international assistance to the democratic opposition in this instance was a reaction to specific events rather than a conscious decision to assist the opposition in its efforts against the regime. As such, once the crisis was resolved the IC returned to the previous pattern of engagement with the regime, pressuring Milošević to ensure that the commitments entered into at Dayton were honoured. This period saw a considerable relaxation of international sanctions against Serbia, and continued IC engagement with Milošević, but did not see a significant increase in the effectiveness of the democratic opposition, as is evident from its poor performance in the 1996 federal elections and the 1997 republican elections. As such, this might suggest that it was the constant engagement with Milošević, which resulted from the IC's approach to dealing with Serbia (coercing the regime to achieve its objectives) rather than the sanctions themselves, that were causing the greatest damage to the opposition.

In conclusion, when considering the differential impact of the various coercive policies that the IC adopted in its dealings with Serbia, the findings of the case studies suggest a number of conclusions. Firstly, it would appear that the sanctions that were imposed on Serbia in the first half of the 1990s did more to undermine the democratic opposition than they did to undermine the Milošević regime. Secondly, the threat to use force against Serbia had such a profound impact on the democratic opposition

parties that they were effectively neutralised for much of 1998 and 1999. A similar impact may also partly account for the inactivity of the democratic opposition between late 1993 and 1996, although there is insufficient evidence to draw any firm conclusions in this regard. Thirdly, the relaxation of the sanctions following Milošević's decision to co-operate with international efforts to resolve the Bosnian conflict did little to improve the position of the democratic opposition parties, suggesting that it was the continued engagement with the regime rather than the coercive policies themselves that did more to undermine the democratic opposition.

As noted in chapter one, both analysts and policymakers have paid little attention to the impact of sanctions on democratic opposition parties operating in target states, and this, according to Kaempfer and Lowenberg, who argue that for sanctions to be effective they must increase the relative power of domestic opposition forces, has been a mistake. While it is not the purpose of this research to evaluate the effectiveness of international sanctions in achieving the goals of the IC, the findings from the case studies above offer considerable support to Kaempfer and Lowenberg's assertion that due consideration must be given to the internal politics of the target state before embarking on a sanctions policy. However, there is little evidence to support their conclusion that sanctions will only be effective if they strengthen the democratic opposition at the expense of the ruling elite. While there is evidence that the UN sanctions that were imposed against the SRJ in 1992 were effective in convincing Milošević to abandon support for the Bosnian Serbs and to co-operate with international efforts to resolve the conflict in Bosnia, this was achieved without increasing the relative power of the democratic opposition parties whose effectiveness was undermined by the sanctions rather than enhanced. While there is evidence to suggest that Milošević's decision to co-operate with the IC was based on his desire to

see the sanctions lifted, it is not possible to say with any degree of confidence whether he considered the potential threat from the opposition when making these calculations.

Kaempfer and Lowenberg's argument regarding the need for a better understanding of the internal politics of the target state before implementing a sanctions policy remains valid however. While the IC may have convinced Milošević to apply pressure on the Bosnian Serbs in an effort to bring the war in Bosnia to an end, there is evidence that they miscalculated the degree of influence that Milošević had over the Bosnian Serb leadership by this time as it was a full two years later - following successful military campaigns by the Bosnian Croats and the Bosnian government and a NATO air campaign against the Bosnian Serbs - that the conflict finally came to an end. Furthermore, the price that was paid for Milošević's co-operation with respect to Bosnia, and the belief that as a signatory of the Dayton agreement he could act as some sort of guarantor of regional stability, was five more years of his rule in Serbia.

This thesis demonstrates that the Serbian democratic opposition did represent a credible alternative partner for the IC throughout the time period covered by this research. International policy with respect to Serbia had a significant direct and indirect impact on the opposition, which often undermined its ability to effectively oppose the regime. However, ultimately it was the opposition which removed Milošević from power and began Serbia's reintegration into the IC. This dissertation therefore suggests that coercive policies by the international community towards a rogue state need to take much greater regard of their impact on the internal democratic opposition than has been the case to date.

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Key websites

The US Department of State Internet Archive

<http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/index.html>

The European Union Press Releases

<http://www.europa.eu/rapid>

The Institute for War and Peace Reporting

<http://www.iwpr.net>

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

<http://www.rferl.org>

Vreme News Digest Agency

http://www.scc.rutgers.edu/serbian_digest

AIM press –Alternative Information Network

<http://www.aimpress.ch>

UN Documentation Centre

<http://www.un.org/documents>

The Centre for Free Elections and Democracy

<http://www.cesid.org>